EXPOSURE TO POLITICAL NEWS VIA MEDIA AND POLITICAL TRUST IN SOUTH AFRICA: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY

By

Melanie Green

Thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Political Science in the Faculty of Political Science at Stellenbosch University

Supervisor: Dr Collette Schulz-Herzenberg

December 2020

The financial assistance of the National Research Foundation (NRF) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the NRF.

DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

December 2020

ABSTRACT

Media usage to gather political news and the attitude of political trust are both key theoretical ingredients for a successful democratic state. Citizens' political trust in the state is essential in ensuring that the decisions made by the political authorities on their behalf are accepted. The media not only fulfils a watchdog function in a democratic state but is also an important communication link and vessel of information between the citizens and government.

Despite their recognised importance, however, media usage and political trust have a contentious relationship. Two key schools of thought exist when referring to the way in which media usage to gather news influences political trust, with supporting evidence found for each. The first is the media malaise school of thought, which argues that an increased exposure to political news will negatively shape the trust that citizens hold towards government and the state. The second school of thought is the virtuous circle, which argues that the increased political knowledge gained through news consumption will promote democratic learning and political trust.

Studies on these schools of thought and the conclusions drawn have largely been conducted in advanced democratic states. This study explored the association between the frequency of media usage to gather political news and political trust in the South African context. South Africa presented an interesting case study to further explore the relationship between these variables and this study contributes to filling this gap in the literature. Firstly, there is a high rate of media usage to gather news in by South African citizens. Secondly, the South African political landscape has been tumultuous in recent years and various corruption and other scandals have been covered widely by the media. Some examples of this include the Nkandla scandal and the allegations of state capture involving the Gupta family.

This study explored the way in which the frequency of media usage to gather political news affects political trust in South Africa. This was achieved through a quantitative approach using Afrobarometer data from survey Round 6 (2015) and Round 7 (2018). The methodology and the operationalisation of the concepts in this study drew from a large body of international literature that fits the context of this research. The media platforms examined in this study were radio, television, newspapers and the internet. Political trust was operationalised using Norris' (1999) conceptual framework and included the following objects of trust: political actors, political institutions, regime performance and regime principles.

The findings reveal surprising results that run contrary to the initial expectations of this study. The frequency of media usage to gather news did not strongly shape citizens' trust in the various political actors and institutions. Instead, the overall association between citizens' trust and the frequency of media usage appears to support the virtuous circle theory for all the media platforms, except for the internet (which instead appears to produce media malaise).

OPSOMMING

Mediagebruik om politieke nuus te versamel en die ingesteldheid van politieke vertroue is albei belangrike teoretiese komponente van ’n suksesvolle demokratiese staat. Politieke vertroue in die staat is noodsaaklik om te sorg dat die besluite wat politieke owerhede namens burgers neem, aanvaar word. Die media in ’n demokratiese staat vervul nie net ’n waghondrol nie, maar is ook ’n belangrike kommunikasieskakel en inligtingsmiddel tussen burgers en die regering.

Nietemin, al word albei as belangrik erken, is die verhouding tussen mediagebruik en politieke vertroue ook omstrede. Daar bestaan twee denkrigtings oor hoe mediagebruik vir nuusversameling politieke vertroue kan beïnvloed, met stawende bewyse vir elk. Die eerste is die denkrigting van media-malaise, wat aanvoer dat verhoogde blootstelling aan politieke nuus ’n negatiewe impak op burgers se vertroue in die regering en die staat het. Die tweede is die denkrigting van die positiewe kringloop, wat beweer dat verhoogde politieke kennis as gevolg van nuusverbruik bevorderlik is vir demokratiese leer en politieke vertroue.

Studies oor hierdie denkrigtings is tot dusver hoofsaaklik in gevorderde demokratiese state onderneem. Hierdie studie ondersoek egter die verband tussen die gereeldheid van mediagebruik om politieke nuus te versamel en politieke vertroue onder burgers in Suid-Afrikaanse verband, en help vul dus ’n leemte in die literatuur. Suid-Afrika bied ’n interessante gevallestudie om die verwantskap tussen hierdie veranderlikes te verken: Eerstens maak Suid-Afrikaanse burgers deeglik gebruik van die media om nuus te versamel. Tweedens is die Suid-Afrikaanse politieke landskap die afgelope paar jaar onstuimig, en berig die media breedvoerig oor verskeie korrupsie- en ander skandale. ’n Paar voorbeelde hiervan is die Nkandla-skandaal, en die bewerings van staatskaping waarby die Gupta-familie betrek word.

Die studie volg ’n kwantitatiewe benadering met behulp van Afrobarometer-data uit opnamerondte 6 (2015) en opnamerondte 7 (2018) om te bepaal watter effek gereelde mediagebruik vir die versameling van politieke nuus op politieke vertroue in Suid-Afrika het. Die metodologie en die inwerkingstelling van die konsepte in hierdie studie is gegrond op ’n uitgebreide versameling internasionale literatuur wat op die konteks van hierdie navorsing betrekking het. Die mediaplatforms wat bestudeer is, is radio, televisie, koerante en die internet. Politieke vertroue is aan die hand van Norris (1999) se konseptuele raamwerk in werking gestel, met politieke rolspelers, politieke instellings, regimeprestasie en regimebeginsels as vertrouensobjekte.

Die navorsingsbevindinge is verrassend en in lynregte teenstelling met wat aanvanklik verwag is. Die studie bring aan die lig dat die gereeldheid van mediagebruik om nuus te versamel nié ’n sterk impak op burgers se vertroue in die verskillende politieke rolspelers en instellings het nie. In plaas daarvan, blyk die algehele verband tussen burgers se vertroue en die gereeldheid van mediagebruik die teorie van die positiewe kringloop te ondersteun vir alle mediaplatforms buiten die internet (wat klaarblyklik eerder media-malaise veroorsaak).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincerest appreciation and gratitude to everyone who has supported and helped me in writing this thesis.

Firstly, thank you to the NRF for the financial support that made this journey possible. I would also like to extend my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Collette Schulz-Herzenberg. Thank you endlessly for all your patience and guidance, all your advice, help and encouragement were greatly appreciated.

Thank you to my parents, David and Sandra Green, for the huge amount of support that you have provided to me during these past two years and over my lifetime. Also, thank you to my sister, Stacey Green, for all the support and laughs. Words cannot express my gratitude for you all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LISTS OF FIGURES AND TABLES

FIGURES

TABLES

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
DA	Democratic Alliance
DESC	Departmental Ethics Screening Committee
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
NES	National Election Studies
NPA	National Prosecuting Authority
SAA	South African Airways
SABC	South African Broadcasting Commission
SOE	State-owned enterprises
PRE	Proportional reduction of error
REC	Research Ethics Committee
SARS	South African Revenue Service
USA	United States of America

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

Political trust and media institutions are both important factors in a democratic state, although the way in which these two aspects interact with each other is widely debated (Norris, 2000:309–312; Avery, 2009:412; Aarts, Strömbäck and Shehata, 2010:577–579; Fladmoe and Strömbäck, 2011:3).

Political trust is largely interlinked with the notions of political legitimacy and support towards a democratic state and is a key indicator in showcasing the health of a democracy (Easton, 1975:444; Inglehart, 1988:1204–1205; Mischler and Rose, 2001:55). Moreover, media institutions tie directly into the democratic notion of freedom and can also be considered as a 'check and balance' relating to the accountability of the state and are often described as 'watchdogs'. Furthermore, the media represents an important channel between people and their political leaders and is the main vehicle through which citizens can gain political information (Berman and Witzner, 1997:1313–1316; McNair, 2009:238:240; Strömbäck and Shehata, 2010:576; Aarts *et al.*, 2011:3).

The importance of these two aspects, namely media institutions and political trust, in a democratic society has resulted in considerable research into how these concepts affect each other, although, as mentioned above, there is considerable disagreement between different authors (Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995:2–8; Avery, 2009:412; Strömbäck and Shehata, 2010:577–579; Aarts *et al*., 2011:3). This study aims to explore the effect that media usage to gather political news through various media platforms, including radio, television, newspapers and the internet, has on South African citizens' levels of political trust. The following five reasons provide the rationale for this study:

- The uncertainty of the causal effects of the media on political trust
- Previous literature on this topic largely focuses on a Western and industrially advanced states
- The recent negative political context in South Africa that makes the country a pertinent case study
- The media environment in South Africa
- South Africans are keen media users.

1.1.1 The debate on the relationship between political trust and media usage

There is little consensus among researchers regarding the causal relationship between the two – specifically how the media shapes the political trust levels of ordinary citizens. There are two broad schools of thought, namely the media malaise theory and the virtuous circle theory (Mutz and Reeves; 2005:2–4; Avery, 2009:410–412; Strömbäck and Shehata, 2010:577–578; Ceron, 2015:488–489). The media malaise school of thought argues that media usage will have a negative effect on popular levels of political trust, while the virtuous circle school of thought generally argues the opposite: that increased media usage can positively shape popular levels of political trust (Norris, 2000:309–311; Mutz and Reeves; 2005:2–3; Avery, 2009:410–412; Strömbäck and Shehata, 2010:577; Norris, 2011:7, 99). This uncertainty about the of media usage on political trust has largely dominated research on this topic. Therefore, the lack of clarity in the literature regarding the way in which media usage to gather political news shapes political trust was a key motivation for this study.

1.1.2 South Africa as a case study

Most research on the topic of how media usage might shape political trust has been conducted in advanced industrial Western democracies. Furthermore, both the media malaise and the virtuous circle schools of thought originated from the context of these democracies (Berger, 1998:602–603; Lin and Lim, 2002:35; Jebril *et al.*, 2013:2; Camaj, 2014:188). Although some research has been conducted in developing states, this study seeks to address this gap in the body of literature by focusing on an African state. South Africa presents an entirely different socio-economic context compared to advanced industrial democracies in the global north.

South Africa is characterised by uneven development, high levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality, and an enduring legacy of apartheid (Southall, 2014:1–7; 2019:12–17; Stats SA, 2019:21). These challenges remain despite the progress that South Africa has made towards addressing the legacy of apartheid that has had a long-lasting effect on the lives of many South Africans (Stats SA, 2019:21).

Some examples of progress that South African has made after 1994 are the following: The South African economy has expanded from $80 billion to $400 billion between 1994 and 2014 (Southall, 2019:12–17). The proportion of the South African population who live below the international poverty line of $1.9 per day has decreased from 25.4% in 2006 to 18.8% in 2015 (Stats SA, 2019:21–22). Furthermore, the creation of an extensive social support system in South Africa has been essential in improving the lives of its people through providing social

support to vulnerable people. It is estimated that by 2015, 71.9% of elderly people and 92.2% of people classified as poor received social grants (Stats SA, 2019:26–27).

Despite the progress made, South Africa faces great levels of unemployment, inequality, and poverty. Between the years 2008 and 2018, the unemployment rate (using the narrow definition) in South Africa increased from 21.5% to almost 28.0% (Southall, 2019:17–19; 2014:7–10). The unemployment rate of the young people of South Africa (15 to 34 years of age) was particularly high and rose from 35.7% in 2010 to 38.7% in 2017. Lastly, the unemployment rate of youths (aged 15 to 24) was extremely high and was valued at 53.4% in 2017 (Stats SA, 2019:119–120). South Africa's economic performance has also slowed in recent years and particularly during Jacob Zuma's first term as president (Southall, 2019:17).

Furthermore, South Africa was named the most unequal state in the world, with the highest Gini coefficient (Southall, 2014:7–10; 2019:17–19). The Gini coefficient "measures the extent of inequalities arising from access to income from wages, salaries and social grants, while per capita expenditure is based on consumption" (Stats SA, 2019:21). In 2018, South Africa's Gini coefficient reached 0.64 (Stats SA, 2019:21). Furthermore, this inequality is largely overlaid by race, gender and location (Southall, 2014:7–10; Southall, 2019:17–19; Stats SA, 2019:21). Therefore, high levels of poverty and inequality are still prevalent in South African society (Stats SA, 2019:22–23).

The challenges that South Africa faces regarding inequality, unemployment and poverty provide an interesting context as well as an important perspective to explore the influence of media usage to gather news on popular levels of political trust. South Africa is not a developed state, and the majority of the research conducted on the association between political trust and political news gathering was in developed states. Therefore, the large extent of poverty, inequality and unemployment faced in South Africa provides a context for this study that is divergent to that of advanced western democracies.

1.1.3 The political context of South Africa

The third motivation for using South Africa as a research case relates to the political environment in the country in recent years; one largely characterised by numerous serious political scandals. A critique of the media malaise and the virtuous circle schools of thought is that the role of context is not always fully considered. The media broadcasts and reports events in the political arena in the context of that state (Moy, Pfau and Kahlor, 1999:139; Moy and Scheufele, 2000:744; De Vreese, 2005:293; Avery, 2009; Aarts *et al.*, 2011; Ceron, 2015:488–

489). This is emphasised by Moy *et al*. (1999:139), who state that "users of particular media tend to perceive democratic institutions as depicted by these sources". It is therefore imperative to briefly outline the context in which South Africans consume their media coverage and the likely content of that coverage.

The year 2014 marked South Africa's 20th year of democratic rule by the African National Congress (ANC). During this year, various political scandals arose surrounding the ANC (Southall, 2019:14). Many of these involved then President Jacob Zuma (BBC News, 2016; Dludla, 2016; News 24, 2018). In 2014, Zuma was widely criticised for utilising taxpayers' money to conduct overly expensive non-security-related upgrades on his private homestead, Nkandla. The unnecessary renovations cost the taxpayers R246 million, instead of the originally budgeted R26 million (BBC News, 2016; Dludla, 2016, Toyana and Macharia, 2016; Makatile, 2016; News 24, 2018). The Office of the Public Protector found that Zuma had "benefited unduly" from the supposed security updates (News 24, 2018). Zuma was ordered to pay back a portion of the amount but fought the order to repay the money until 2016 (BBC News, 2016; Dludla, 2016, Toyana and Macharia, 2016).

There has been an increase in corruption allegations in the South African political realm in recent years (Southall, 2019:13–14). This includes allegations of 'state capture'. State capture is a form of corruption where high level figures conspire to influence a country's decision-making processes to ensure their private interests are advances (Arun, 2019). These corruption allegations were levelled as a consequence of Jacob Zuma's inappropriate relationship with the Gupta brothers, Ajay, Atul and Rajesh Gupta, who built a business empire in mining, media, technology and engineering (News 24, 2018; Arun, 2019).

Some examples of the inappropriate relationship between the Gupta family and government are as follows. In 2016, the members of the Gupta family were given permission by Zuma as a personal favour to land their private aeroplane at the Waterkloof military air base, which is a privilege that is not granted to civilians in South Africa and it is illegal to do so (Business Tech, 2016; Phakathi, 2019; Sidimba, 2019). Moreover, the Gupta family were also found to be implicated in former public protector Thuli Madonsela's state capture report, as it emerged that members of the Gupta family had offered key government jobs to people who could further their business interests, including former deputy Finance minister Mcebisi Jonas (Business Tech, 2016; News 24, 2018; Arun, 2019). Various other industries and institutions that were reported to be 'captured' included the ministries of natural resources, finance and public

enterprise, and several government institutions including South African Airways (SAA), Eskom and the South African Broadcasting Commission (SABC) (Mutize and Gossel, 2017; Arun, 2019). Various high-ranking public officials, such as Pravin Gordhan, have spoken about the looting of state-owned enterprises (SOE) from being 'captured' and where corruption and mismanagement pushed the SOEs to the brink of collapse (Mutize and Gossel, 2017; News 24, 2018; Cohen and Vollgraaff, 2019).

After a series of back and forth court cases the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) found Zuma to be liable to face prosecution of cases of corruption, money laundering, fraud and racketeering on around 800 counts. The counts largely dated back to an arms deal that took place in the 1990s when Zuma was the deputy president of South Africa (News 24, 2014; Al Jazeera, 2017; IOL, 2018). Zuma allegedly accepted bribes from international arms manufacturers to influence the choice of weaponry (News 24, 2018).

In 2015 the African Union Summit was held in Johannesburg. Despite being wanted for war crimes by International Criminal Court (ICC) Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir was not arrested while he was on South African soil (Al Jazeera, 2017; IOL, 2018). In 2016 Zuma was accused of acting illegally by the Supreme Court of Appeal by failing to arrest al-Bashir. Furthermore, the ICC ruled later in 2016 that South Africa had violated its rules by failing to arrest al-Bashir (Al Jazeera, 2017; IOL, 2018; News 24, 2018).

Zuma decided to shuffle the cabinet and remove Finance minister Nhlanhla Nene and deputy Finance minister Mcebisi Jonas from office and replace them with unknown legislators. Following a huge outcry, the cabinet was reshuffled a few days later, and Pravin Gordhan was again placed in this position. These changes resulted in South Africa's credit rating being downgraded to junk status by the credit-rating agencies Standard and Poor's and Fitch in 2017 (Al Jazeera, 2017; IOL, 2018). This cabinet shuffle also caused the South African markets to lose around 500 billion dollars (Business Tech 2016). This decision, coupled with the other political scandals discussed above, resulted in widespread protests across South Africa involving tens of thousands of people (BBC, 2017; ENCA, 2017).

In addition to the political incumbents ushering attacks on the public protector, in response to the office exercising its constitutional right to conduct various checks and balances procedures in an effort to ensure against antimajoritarian efforts, Zuma was also accused of interfering with the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) (Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017:201–203).

The political environment in South Africa in recent years especially has been largely filled with political scandals. This includes an economic decline and scandals relating to state capture, corruption, patronage, poor service delivery, the rise of populist rhetoric and action, an overall blurring of the distinction between the ruling party and the state, and a general lack of adherence to democratic norms and values in many cases (Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:13–14; Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws 2017:208–210). This is the overall context within which South African's consume media. Moreover, much of the media coverage was dedicated to coverage of these highly negative stories.

1.1.4 The media environment in South Africa

One key function of media institutions is to transfer information to the public (Findlay and Dayile, 2019:1–2). It is clear that the South African political landscape is widely discussed by media institutions (Findlay and Dayile, 2019:2–3). In 2019, the top five topics that were covered 45% of the time in the period by the 61 media platforms examined were all politically related topics. These topics included political party politics, party campaigning, national politics, service delivery and election logistics (Findlay and Dayile, 2019:2–3). This is similarly true in 2014, when the ten most covered topics in the media accounted for 89% of coverage and were largely politically related. The topics included party campaigning, party politics, corruption (Nkandla especially), media, opinion polls, party manifesto analysis, protests, the justice system and political violence (Media Monitoring Africa, 2014:2–3). Furthermore, between the years 2015 and 2018, a total of 16,171 stories from 80 online media platforms about Zuma specifically were published. These stories had a focus of Nkandla, the Gupta Leaks, the 'Zuma must fall' campaign and Zuma's resignation (Smith, 2018).

When comparing the total media coverage that the political parties received, the ANC received the most media coverage (53%) in 2019. Following the ANC, the Democratic Alliance (DA) received 19% and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) 11% of the media coverage (Findlay and Dayile, 2019:6). This is similarly true in 2014, as the same three political parties received a similar amount of media coverage in this same order (Media Monitoring Africa, 2014:1).

The South African media has largely played a watchdog role in the South African political landscape. The South African media is arguably committed to ensuring democratic norms in the state and exposing state corruption and other political scandals (Wasserman, 2010:573–574; Sparks, 2011:5–6). News media institutions therefore play a role related to monitoring regarding the state and the political landscape. After the end of apartheid, many news media

institutions also attempted to distance themselves from the state, which led to the critique that the news media is overly focused on the state and the actions of the state (Malila, 2013:80–81; Wasserman and Garman, 2014:405). South African media institutions are argued to have risen as another player in the political arena. These institutions were even argued to play the role of an opposition party to the ruling ANC to counter the large degree of political power held by the latter; this is in part due to the lack of a strong opposition political party to the ANC (Wasserman, 2010:573–574; Sparks, 2011:5–6; Malila, 2013:80–81; Wasserman and Garman, 2014:405).

1.1.5 The South African media users

South African citizens are avid users of the media to gather news (see Table 1.1). The two most popular media platforms in South Africa to gather news are television and radio. In 2015, 82% of citizens used the radio to gather news at least a few times a week, with a similar figure in 2018 (72% of citizens) (Afrobarometer, 2015; 2018). The number of citizens who used the television to gather news at least a few times a week was 91% in 2015 and 83% in 2018. Although newspapers are not utilised as extensively as radio and television to gather news, a large number of citizens utilise this platform. In 2015, 51% and in 2018 39% of citizens used newspapers to gather news at least a few times a month. Furthermore, although a fair number of people use the internet, it is the least utilised media platform in South Africa; in 2015, 51% of citizens and 48% of citizens in 2018 never used the internet to gather news (Afrobarometer, 2015; 2018). South African citizens therefore have had a large amount of exposure to the political news that has been widely reported through the various media institutions.

Table 1.1: The amount of South African citizens who gather news from various sources

How often do you get news from the following sources?	**Every day (%)**		**A few times a week (%)**		**A few times a month (%)**		**Less than once a month (%)**		**Never (%)**	
	2015	**2018**	**2015**	**2018**	**2015**	**2018**	**2015**	**2018**	**2015**	**2018**
Radio	67.7	55.8	14.4	16	4	6.1	2.7	3	11.3	19
Television	80.6	69.3	9.9	12.7	2.2	4.3	1	1.9	6.3	11.8
Newspapers	27.3	19.7	23.4	19.5	16.5	12.9	9.6	7.9	23.2	40
Internet	24.5	32.8	12.8	8.8	7.3	6.4	4.2	3.8	51.2	48.2

The important role that the media plays in imparting political information is captured by Afrobarometer's 2018 data, which found that 85% of the South African population recognised the media as being either very effective or somewhat effective with regard to revealing government's mistakes as well as corruption in the state. The citizens of South Africa do not support media intervention by the state, with 61% of South African citizens believing that the media has a right to publish without state intervention (Afrobarometer, 2018).

Furthermore, South African citizens also have considerable trust in the country's media institutions (see Table 1.2). In 2015, 77% of citizens and 60% in 2018 stated they trust the government broadcasting services (SABC [the South African Broadcasting Corporation], television networks and radio) at least somewhat. Similarly, in 2015 and 2018, 85% and 61% of the population, respectively, indicated that they trust the independent broadcasting services (Afrobarometer, 2015; 2018). Independent Media was the only institution among 18 that were found to enjoy an increase in political trust, from 69% to 79% between 2011 and 2015 (Chingwete, 2016:1–2).

Table 1.2: South African citizens' trust in media institutions

How much do you trust each of the following?	**Not at all (%)**		**Just a little (%)**		**Somewhat (%)**		**A lot (%)**	
	2015	**2018**	**2015**	**2018**	**2015**	**2018**	**2015**	**2018**
Government broadcasting services	7.3	16.7	16.3	23.3	37.1	22	39.4	38
Independent broadcasting services	5.9	15.1	12.4	23.5	35	22.1	49.7	39.3

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

As emphasised above, numerous political scandals have dominated the political landscape since 2014 and have implicated many public officials across all levels of government. Furthermore, these political scandals have been widely reported by South Africa's news outlets. Therefore, the ordinary South African citizen has been exposed to a tumultuous political landscape with a high degree of media exposure of widely reported negative stories of corruption and malfeasance. Moreover, not only do citizens use traditional media widely, they

are also widely trusting of these news media platforms. It is therefore argued that South African citizens have been exposed to large volumes of negative news coverage of the political landscape, largely via South Africa's traditional media platforms, including radio and television.

The traditional standpoint in the literature argues that a democratic political system requires a deep-seated, diffuse reservoir of trust to create a supportive democratic culture. This is emphasised in the key works of Easton (1965; 1975) and Almond and Verba (1963). Almond and Verba (1963) show the importance of a supportive democratic culture with regard to the impact that citizens' orientations have on the stability and performance of the democratic regime.

Moreover, various studies have found empirical evidence to support this claim. Several authors argue that citizens are more likely to uphold the law if they consider government to be trustworthy, as it is considered the 'right thing to do' and will benefit the political community as a whole. As well as expending more effort and resources towards the state to attain policy goals, it was therefore found that the citizens were more likely to pay their taxes without evasion if they held a higher degree of trust in government (Easton, 1975; Scholz and Lubell, 1998; Levi and Stoker, 2000; Dalton, 2004; Marien and Hooghe, 2011; Dalton, 2014).

For these various reasons, political trust is essential for the legitimacy of a democratic political system. Conversely, a decline in political trust can be problematic for a state, with negative systematic effects. A democratic political system is unique in its ability to make decisions for society, and trust is required to ensure that there is a high probability that these decisions will be accepted (Easton, 1965:96). If the people become disillusioned or disaffected, if they are not pleased with the performance of the institutions or political actors, or if the actors are corrupt, for example, increased dissatisfaction may negatively influence the people's long-seated support for and trust in the political system of democracy and may result in major constitutional changes (Norris, 1999:15–16). Furthermore, increased dissatisfaction and trust could lead to dissolving the consensus between government and its citizens to follow the 'rules of the game', and basic principles of democracy, such as tolerance for minorities, may not be adhered to (Norris, 1999:16).

As alluded to above, political trust is not formed in a vacuum, but is swayed by economic, political and historical trends (Zmerli and Hooghe, 2011:1–5). It is clear that South African citizens take into consideration the performance of the state when forming their attitude of

political trust (Askvik, 2010:38–40; Chingwete, 2016:1–2). Furthermore, it has become evident from previous research that political trust is declining over time in South Africa (Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017:223).

Therefore, the political environment, the media landscape and the decline in political trust levels in South Africa raise the possibility that these factors may indeed affect one another. In other words, the question is whether the largely negative media coverage of the political arena, to which South Africans are exposed on an almost daily basis, has contributed to the decline in political trust witnessed in South Africa over time.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

This research addresses the following main research question and sub-question:

- Does frequency of media usage by South African citizens to gather political news have a measurable impact on popular levels of political trust?
    - More specifically, did frequency of media usage to gather political news from radio, television, newspapers and the internet affect trust in four key political objects, namely political actors, regime institutions (specifically political institutions), regime performance, and regime principles in the years 2015 and 2018?

1.4 THEORETICAL REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The theoretical literature on this topic is presented in four parts. The first section entails a review of the literature on political trust. The second section discusses political trust in South Africa. The third part presents the research on the effect that media usage has on political trust. The fourth section relates to South African media institutions and their sway on democracy. This section is presented in detail in Chapter 2 and emphasises the key theoretical arguments of the study.

1.4.1 Political trust

The attitude of political trust forms a key concept in this study. As such, it is essential that the theoretical foundations of political trust are examined and understood. The theoretical underpinnings of political trust were largely pioneered by David Easton (1975). Easton (1975:447) first conceptualised political trust as “the probability that the political system will produce preferred outcomes even if left untended”. Therefore, the existence of political trust in

a democratic system shows a belief among citizens that public goods will be provided by the state without citizens being required to continually ensure their provision (Easton, 1975:447; Levi and Stoker, 2000:476). Easton's (1975) empirical conceptualisation of political trust is still widely utilised in political trust research.

The literature demonstrates that political trust is related to other political concepts, such as political support and political legitimacy. This interrelationship between political support, trust and legitimacy can be understood in the following way, as suggested by Easton (1975:447): "[S]support for the political authorities or a regime will typically express itself in two forms: trust or confidence in them, and in the belief of the legitimacy of these objects." Therefore, although trust, support and legitimacy are interrelated, they are conceptually distinct from one another. Political support is therefore used to operationalise political trust.

The link between political trust and political support is further emphasised through the establishment of two types of political support, namely that of specific support and diffuse support (Easton, 1975:449–450). Specific support relates to how citizens experience the state, and is directly tied to the satisfaction levels of citizens with the performance of the state, policy outcomes, and the political actions of political authorities (Easton, 1975:437-439; Norris, 1999:10-12; Catterberg and Moreno, 2005:45; Dalton, 2014:253-254). Diffuse support refers to the deep-seated reservoir of political support held by citizens for the regime and the principles of the regime (Easton, 1975:437-439; Dalton, 2014:253-254).

Diffuse support is not as movable as specific support, as it is not tied to political incumbents. A reservoir of diffuse support is necessary for the survival of a democracy (Easton, 1975:444; Criado and Herreros, 2007:1512–1513; Dalton, 2014:253-254). The differentiation between specific support and diffuse support can be explained through support for a sports team. The immediate dissatisfaction that is felt once a sports team loses represents specific support. Moreover, the longstanding support a person holds for a specific team represents diffuse support. Continual losses of the sports team could cause a person to become disenfranchised with the sports team and chose to support another team. Therefore, eroding the reservoir of diffuse support could have dire consequences for a political system (Dalton, 2014:253).

Building of the differentiation of specific and diffuse support, Norris (1999) built a conceptual framework to operationalise political support through various targets of political trust. In Norris' (1999:7–13) conceptual framework of political objects, she argues that citizens extend their political support to five political objects.

Norris' (1999) conceptual framework consists of five levels. The first level of this framework relates to the political community. This level refers to citizens' attachment to a common political identity that transcends various state institutions (Easton, 1975:444; Norris, 1999:7–8). The second level refers to the principles of the regime. The values that underscore a democratic state are contested, as different states choose to prioritise different values, such as the rule of law. The third level of this framework relates to the performance of the regime. This level relates to citizens' experiences with the regime's functioning and whether or not it has delivered to meet their needs. The fourth level relates to the institutions of the regime and the confidence that citizens have in these various institutions. These institutions include, for example, Parliament. The fifth level measures the confidence that citizens have in the political incumbents that are positioned in these institutions (Norris, 1999:9–16).

1.4.2 Political trust in South Africa

The political attitudes, including political trust, in a population are formed against a background of historical, political and economic trends and not in a vacuum (Zmerli and Hooghe, 2011:1–5). In South Africa, state performance has been found to have an influence on the political trust levels in the country (Askvik, 2010:38–40; Chingwete, 2016:1–2). Various other factors were identified by authors that effected political trust in South Africa include: the existence of corruption, lack of service delivery, the one-party dominance of the ANC and other political scandals that have emerged in recent years (Mattes, 2002:23; Butler, 2005:735–736; Friedman, 2005:757–758; Askvik, 2010:30–32; Hutchison and Johnson, 2011:739; Chingwete, 2016:1–2; Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:14–15; Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017:208; Mantzaris *et al*., 2017:81;).

Moreover, the literature clearly points to a general decline in trust levels among South African citizens towards democratic actors and institutions. Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws (2017:223), for example, examined levels of political trust and political support in South Africa over a 10-year period. The authors found that despite the high levels of diffuse support in the early years of South Africa's democracy, there was a decrease in both diffuse support and specific support in the various objects of political trust, and that this decline increased greatly between the years 2006 and 2014 (Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017:223). A general trend of decline with regard to political trust was also found by other authors, including Mattes (2002:31–32), Catterberg and Moreno (2005:38–39), Chingwete (2016:9–10), Mantzaris *et al*. (2017:81).

1.4.3 The media and political trust

The relationship between political trust and media consumption by citizens in a state is a contentious issue between political scientists. When looking at how media usage might influence political trust attitudes, scholars can be divided broadly into two divergent schools of thought: media malaise and virtuous circle (Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–2; Ceron, 2015:487–489; Strömbäck, Djerf-Pierre and Shehata, 2016:89–90). Evidence has been established for both schools of thought.

The first school of thought is termed 'media malaise', which arose from a hypothesis that was created by Robinson (1975), who focused on the negative influence of news consumption through the television on citizens' trust levels. This thought was then transported to other media platforms and is now considered to be the dominant school of thought in the literature (Mutz and Reeves; 2005:2–4; Avery, 2009:410–412; Strömbäck and Shehata, 2010:577–578; Ceron, 2015:488–489). This school of thought argues that a higher frequency of media usage can have a negative sway on citizens' levels of political trust. There are a variety of reasons for this, but the increased negativity in the news media is largely emphasised (Mutz and Reeves; 2005:2–3; Avery, 2009:410–411; Strömbäck and Shehata, 2010:577).

The second school of thought is termed the 'virtuous circle'. It provides a counterargument to the media malaise school of thought and emphasises that a higher frequency of media usage can have a positive influence on political trust. This should be especially true of newspaper usage. This would occur through a circle effect, where increased political knowledge gained through accessing the media is emphasised as an important part of democratic learning as well as producing trust in democratic institutions. This school of thought emphasises that the citizens who are politically trusting already will only be affected positively, whereas the distrusting citizens will not engage with the media (Norris, 2000:309–311; Norris, 2011:99; Avery, 2009:412).

Furthermore, as mentioned previously, it must be emphasised that the schools of thought and hypothesises that have been drawn from research findings largely relate to advanced Western democracies. Far less research has been conducted in states that are non-Western democracies (Berger, 1998:602–603; Lin and Lim, 2002:35; Jebril *et al*., 2013:2; Camaj, 2014:188).

1.5 HYPOTHESES AND EXPECTATIONS

In line with the contrasting media usage theories the following three hypotheses are posited for this study:

1.5.1 Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 draws from the media malaise school of thought. This hypothesis argues that a high frequency of media usage to gather political news will negatively influence the South African citizens political support and therefore, their political trust in the political actors, political institutions, regime performance and regime support. Following the work of Easton (1975) and Norris (1999), a decrease in specific support can negatively affect the deep-seated reservoir of diffuse support that is necessary for the survival of a democratic state. Therefore, a high frequency of political news usage will promote broad and deep-seated political distrust amongst the citizens.

1.5.2 Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 draws on the virtuous circle school of thought. This hypothesis argues that a high frequency of media usage to gather political news will have a positive influence on citizens' levels of political trust towards actors, institutions, regime performance, and the regime. This hypothesis builds on Norris' (2000) argument where increased political knowledge gained through accessing the media is emphasised as an important part of democratic learning which, in turn, produces greater trust in political institutions and the democratic regime. This school of thought emphasises that the citizens who are politically trusting already will be affected positively, whereas the distrusting citizens will not engage with the media (Norris, 2000:309–311).

1.5.3 Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 is the null hypothesis, namely that the frequency of media usage to gather political news does not influence citizens' political trust in political actors, political institutions, regime performance and regime principles. The correlation between the frequency of media usage and political trust is null and void according to this hypothesis as political trust will not be affected by the citizens' political news gathering habits.

1.5.4 Expectations

The two schools of thought, namely the media malaise school of thought and the virtuous circle school of thought, provide two alternative understandings of the way in which frequency of media usage might shape political trust in South Africa. Media institutions play a significant role in communicating political information to citizens, if the latter choose to engage with the

media, and many citizens in South Africa do engage with the numerous traditional media platforms on a regular basis.

The expected results of this study are that hypothesis 1 will hold - the higher the frequency of media usage by citizens, the less likely they are to trust political actors, namely politicians and political institutions. Furthermore, these citizens are likely to hold a lower satisfaction level with democracy and possibly be less supportive of a democratic regime. Therefore, the study hypothesised that there would be an inverse relationship between political trust and the frequency of media usage: as media consumption increases, political trust would decline. The reasons for this expectation are discussed below.

As mentioned above, many South Africans utilise various media types to gather political information fairly regularly. Moreover, the study respondents also showed a great deal of trust in South African media institutions and their ability to showcase government's mistakes. The media institutions in South Africa are considered to fulfil a watchdog role in the country's democracy, and therefore there has been a great deal of negative political information released and discussed in the news. It is therefore expected that citizens who access political information via the media are extensively exposed to government's transgressions and the allegations of corruption levelled against the incumbent party in recent years. This high level of exposure to news that is largely negative in content is the result of the many political scandals and transgressions of democratic norms that have emerged since 2015. This is expected to contribute towards citizens having a low degree of political trust in the democratic actors and institutions because of the largely negative media coverage on the South African political realm.

Furthermore, it must be emphasised that context is a theme emphasised in the political trust literature, especially by scholars who examine how media usage shapes political trust. The context of the state is emphasised as the performance and actions of the state and political elites. This political context effects the information reported on by the media (Mishler and Rose, 2001; Zmerli and Hooghe, 2011).

Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg (2016:18) found that South Africans do not distinguish their political trust judgements between the political incumbent who is currently representing a specific institution and the institution itself. This lack of differentiation between political actors and political institutions adds weight to Hypothesis 1, that a high frequency of media usage

will have a negative impact on citizen's levels of political trust, when coupled with the large amount of negative political news that has surfaced regarding the South African government.

Furthermore, Bratton and Mattes (2001:454–458) found that South Africans tend to understand democracy instrumentally as opposed to intrinsically. South African citizens largely understand democracy as performance-driven, and so for a democracy with instrumental support to survive and consolidate democratically, the state needs to "deliver the goods" (Bratton and Mattes, 2001:474). The political goods emphasised by these authors are most commonly for the state to improve the standard of living and alleviate the poverty of its citizens (Bratton and Mattes, 2001:448). Instrumental support for democracy is in stark contrast to intrinsic support, where the democratic support and consolidation are garnered off support for the values associated with a democratic state, such as an emphasis on political freedom as well as equal rights among citizens (Bratton and Mattes, 2001:448–449). It is likely that this democratic understanding will further support the hypothesis regarding a lessening of satisfaction with democracy (hypothesis 1), as citizens could interpret the largely negative political news about the state as a failure of the South African government to provide the political goods. As democratic understanding is largely instrumental, this could therefore negatively affect citizens' democratic satisfaction, political support and political trust in political actors and institutions.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

By exploring the effect of media usage to gather political news on political trust, the research may assist in developing a better understanding of the role of the media in a democratic South Africa. Specifically, which school of thought, the media malaise or the virtuous circle, holds in South Africa. These two schools of thought promote alternate hypotheses on how media usage shapes political trust. The media malaise school of thought has found evidence that using the media to gather political news has a negative influence on political trust, while the virtuous circle school of thought emphasises the role that political news plays in building trust. The significance of this study exists in the divergent conclusions that the media malaise and virtuous circle schools of thought promote, and the different consequences that each school of thought has within the context of South Africa.

This is especially pertinent due to the turbulent political context in South African over recent years which has been widely reported on in the news media. Furthermore, many South African citizens are avid news consumers and have, therefore, been widely exposed to these political

scandals. The significance of this study lies in a further exploration of how gathering political news shapes political trust, which in turn can affect the democratic state.

A supportive political culture is pertinent to a democratic state and, in this political culture, political trust is vital. Without the existence of trust among citizens in the various state institutions, political actors and a democratic state will be unable to survive (Easton, 1975:447-449). Citizens' trust in the state is influenced by how they perceive the performance of government; the social contract of democracy, where citizens entrust politicians with political affairs, is therefore tested. The state of political trust in a country is a pertinent test when regarding the health of a democracy and is described as being the warning sign with regard to identifying problems in a democracy (Norris, 1999:2-5).

Hypothesis 1 states that a high frequency of gathering political news would result in a malaise amongst citizens which would therefore negatively shape political trust. According to the works by Easton (1975) and Norris (1999), the impact of the decrease of political trust is dependent on the different levels or targets of trust. A decrease in political trust of the political authorities is not detrimental to the democratic political system as the political incumbents can be voted out. A continual loss of satisfaction with the political actors can erode the reservoir of diffuse support that is essential to a democracies functioning and could have a system-level effect if the citizens are not trusting of the regime principles for example (Norris, 1999:10-12; Dalton, 2014:253-257). Therefore, if the media malaise hypothesis holds in the South African context for the various targets of trust in this study, this study could potentially point to negative consequences for the democratic regime in South Africa.

Hypothesis 2 refers to the virtuous circle school of thought. This school of thought emphasises that political news is a key aspect of democratic learning and that the members of the media who engage with the media are more likely to be trusting. This school of thought emphasises a cyclic effect, where the trusting citizens would continue to engage with the media which would in turn increase or enforce political trust in institutions and the democratic regime (Norris, 2000:309–311; Avery, 2009:412; Norris, 2011:99). Therefore, although dissatisfaction with the political incumbents might not be present, trust in the political institutions and regime principles would be present. This hypothesis would, therefore, positively shape trust and the system-level effects of decreasing political trust is not tied to the citizens' political news gathering habits.

1.7 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND OPERATIONALISATION

This study will use a quantitative method to answer the research question and determine the effect of frequency of media usage on citizens' trust in political objects such as actors, political institutions, regime performance and regime principles. Quantitative survey data from two Afrobarometer surveys, namely Round 6 in 2015 and Round 7 in 2018, will be used. This study is therefore a cross-sectional study using two distinct data points. The research question will be answered by making inferences from the appropriate statistical analysis. The same operationalisation, methodology and statistical analyses are performed on both data sets (survey rounds 6 and 7). Chapter 3 presents a detailed overview of the research design, methodology and operationalisation of the variables.

A quantitative approach is best suited to analysing political attitudes and behaviour (De Vaus, 2001:7–8; Pierce, 2011:4–5), specifically political trust in this study. Quantitative survey research has long been utilised by researchers in the political science discipline (Brady, 2000:47; Clawson and Oxley, 2012:27). Although it is a minority tradition in South Africa, there is a history of quantitative survey research in the country (Mattes, 2013:479–480). This study will add to the deficit of quantitative survey research on political trust in South Africa specifically.

1.7.1 The independent variable

Frequency of media usage to gather political news forms the independent variable. This variable will be operationalised through the Afrobarometer survey question that asks: "How often do you get news from the following sources?" This question item taps the frequency of media usage from the following media platforms: radio, television, newspapers, the internet and social media. All the media platforms will be used in this study to operationalise this variable, except social media, as it does not fall within the scope of the study. Frequency of media usage will be operationalised through two iterations: Phase 1 and Phase 2.

1.7.1.1 Phase 1

Phase 1 consists of two media usage scales computed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). A compatibility analysis of the question items will be conducted before the scale is formulated. This is discussed further in Chapter 3. The variables in this phase will be formulated as follows:

- *Media Usage Variable 1*: The first media usage variable will measure frequency of media usage to gather political news via the following media platforms: radio, television and

newspapers. This media usage variable will therefore be formulated to include only traditional media platforms. The internet is excluded included in the scale.

- *Media Usage Variable 2*: This second variable measure the frequency of media usage to gather political news but now includes the internet in addition to radio, TV and newspapers.

The reasons for the inclusion and exclusion of the internet is to firstly account for the disparity of internet access in South Africa, and secondly, because the internet is the least utilised media platform to gather news out of the media platforms relevant to this study (see Table 1.1).

1.7.1.2 Phase 2

Phase 2 will determine the influence of each media platform separately (radio, television, newspapers and the internet). The primary reason for including Phase 2 is to isolate the unique effects of and account for differences in the way each media platform may shape political trust.

1.7.2 The dependent variable

Political trust is the dependent variable. Political trust will be operationalised along the axes of diffuse and specific support (see Easton, 1975; Norris, 1999). Levels of political support extended towards political objects is largely how political trust is operationalised throughout the literature (see Chapter 3). Specifically, Norris' (1999) fivefold conceptual framework of the targets of political trust forms the basis for operationalising the dependent variable. This study will focus on four levels of the fivefold framework, namely political actors, regime institutions (political institutions), regime performance and regime principles (see Chapter 3).

1.7.2.1 Political actors

Trust in political actors will be operationalised into two question indices formulated from two different question items. Therefore, the study has two measures for political actors. The choice of political actors are operationalised by applying Norris' (1999) definition of political actors (see Chapter 3).

- *Political Actors Trust Index*: This index will form the primary measure of trust in political actors. This variable will be operationalised through the following question item: "How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?" The following political actors will form part of this index: the president and officials in his office, and members of Parliament.
- *Political Actors Corruption Index*: This index will form the secondary measure of trust in political actors and will be operationalised through the following question item:

"How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?" The respondents were asked this question in relation to various actors and authorities. The following political actors are identified as relevant to the study: the president and officials in his office, members of Parliament, government officials and local government councillors.

1.7.2.2 Political institutions

Political institutions will be operationalised in a similar fashion using Norris' (1999) framework to identify appropriate political institutions from a question item. Only one question item will be utilised to operationalise political institutions, namely: "How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?" The identified relevant political institutions will be operationalised through one index and two question items.

- Government Institutions Trust Index: This index will include the political institutions that form part of the umbrella term 'government institutions': Parliament and local government councils.
- Political parties' variables: The political parties variables will include the ruling ANC party and opposition political parties. The trust in these two variables will be measured separately and not combined into a Political Parties Index.

1.7.2.3 Regime performance and regime principles

Regime performance and regime principles form the next two levels of Norris' (1999) framework. These two targets will be operationalised through one question item each and no constructed indices. Regime performance is measured through a question item that asks respondents to identify their satisfaction with democracy. Regime principles is measured by asking respondents about their support for democracy.

1.8 A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF FORTHCOMING CHAPTERS

Chapter 2: *The literature review:* This chapter will outline the existing literature on political trust research and the relationship between media usage and political trust. It will do so under the topics of an exploration of political trust, political trust in South Africa, the mass media and political trust, and South African media institutions and their relation to democracy.

Chapter 3: *Research design and methodology:* This chapter will discuss in detail the research design and research methodology that will be utilised in this study and shows the

operationalisation of the research question based on literature. The ethical considerations and limitations of the study will also be discussed.

Chapter 4: *Exposure to political news via the media and trust in political actors:* This chapter reports on the findings concerning the relationship between media consumption and the political trust in the identified political actors.

Chapter 5: *Exposure to political news via the media and trust in political institutions:* This chapter reports on the findings concerning the relationship between media consumption and political trust in the identified political institutions.

Chapter 6: *Exposure to political news via the media and trust in regime performance and regime principles:* This chapter reports on the findings concerning the relationship between media consumption and satisfaction with regime performance and support for regime principles.

Chapter 7: *Conclusion*: This chapter will present the final conclusions of the study. In this chapter, a synopsis of the study is given, and the results are used to answer the research question. The shortcomings in this study and areas for further research will also be identified.

CHAPTER 2: THE LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a review of the literature on political trust and media consumption. The review is divided into four main sections. The first section relates to political trust. The concept of political trust plays a key role in this study and forms the theoretical underpinning of this research. It is therefore necessary to first discuss the concept of political trust to better understand how political trust relates to media consumption. To explore political trust, one must also examine the related concepts of political support and political legitimacy. All three concepts are theoretically distinct, but related. As such, political support was used as a proxy for measuring levels of political trust in various political objects.

The second section discusses political trust in South Africa, including recent findings and trends. The third section draws upon research that has been conducted on the effect that media usage has on political trust and the various schools of thought on the relationship between these two variables. It also focuses on research on media usage in less developed democracies, despite its under researched status. The fourth section focuses on South Africa and examines the influence that media usage has on political attitudes as well as how the media institutions are perceived by the South African public.

2.2 AN EXPLORATION OF POLITICAL TRUST

2.2.1 Political trust as a concept

A supportive democratic culture is vitally important in a democratic state. A political culture that is conducive to a climate of political trust by citizens has long been recognised by political scientists as essential to a democracy (Inglehart, 1988:1204–1205). The importance of a supportive democratic culture was largely emphasised by the key work of Almond and Verba (1963). It is recognised that for a democracy to continue to function successfully, the legitimacy of the system provided by the political trust of the citizens in political institutions and actors is necessary. Almond and Verba (1963) argue that a supportive civic culture is crucial to the stability of a democratic regime.

The theoretical underpinnings of political trust were largely pioneered by David Easton (1975). Easton's (1975) description of political trust is a key work in the literature. Easton (1975:447) first conceptualised political trust as "the probability that the political system will produce preferred outcomes even if left untended". The existence of political trust in a democratic

system shows a belief created by citizens that their judgements of a state is that public goods will be provided by the state without citizens being required to act as a 'watchdog' towards the state (Easton, 1975:447; Levi and Stoker, 2000:476). Easton's (1975) empirical conceptualisation of political trust is still widely utilised in political trust research (Dalton, 1998:1-2; Norris, 1999:1-2; Dalton, 2014:257-258).

Political trust is a concept that is interlinked with other political concepts, such as political support and political legitimacy, although these concepts are all distinct from one another (Easton, 1975:447-449; Catterberg and Moreno, 2005:45). To understand political trust, it is therefore imperative to examine the linkage between political trust and political support and legitimacy. Political support for political authorities or the regime will likely manifest in two different ways, the first being trust and the second being a belief in their validity or legitimacy (Easton, 1975:447; 1976:431–432). Political authorities in a democratic state would not be able to implement decisions except under the conditions of trust from the members of the population they are governing (Easton. 1975:448; Norris 1999:15-16). Political trust in political actors and institutions depends on the extent to which citizens support these actors and institutions (Catterberg and Moreno, 2005:45).

Easton's (1965; 1975) empirical framework is considered to be of high importance by various authors and is still widely utilised in political trust and support research, and has been long regarded as a key framework of political support (Muller and Jukam, 1977:1561; Dalton, 1998:1–2; Norris, 1999:1-3; Marien, 2011:1-4). Easton (1975:436) defines political support for a state as consisting of two different categories, namely specific and diffuse support. The key differentiating factor between these two types of support, is that specific support represents content or discontent with the political incumbents, whereas diffuse support represents satisfaction of dissatisfaction with the political regime itself (Easton, 1975:436-437).

Specific support is object specific support. Specific support is therefore directly related to the satisfaction of citizens with the performance and decision making of political authorities, as well as the outcomes of state initiatives such as policy directives, executive decisions and actions by political actors (Easton, 1975:437-438; Norris, 1999: 10-12; Catterberg and Moreno, 2005:45; Criado and Herreros, 2007:1512–1513; Dalton, 2014:257-258). Specific support exists under the assumption that the citizens are able to identify political authorities or that they must have knowledge of the existence of the political authorities and that the citizens recognise

that the political authorities are responsible for ensuring their political satisfaction (Easton, 1975:437-438).

The second type of political support identified by Easton (1975:444) is diffuse support. This is defined as a deep-seated reservoir of political support held by the citizens for the regime and the principles that it stands for, as well as for the political community. Diffuse support is hard-wearing in comparison to specific support. Moreover, diffuse support is essential for a democracy's survival, as it is needed to tolerate and overcome periods where low amounts of specific support exist (Easton, 1975:444; Norris, 1999:10-12; Criado and Herreros, 2007:1512–1513; Dalton, 2014:257-258). Diffuse support is essential to a democratic state (Dalton, 2014:257-258). Easton (1975:448) states that "normally the authorities must be able to count on the freedom to commit a society without, in each instance, having to obtain the prior consent of those who control the necessary resources." Therefore, without diffuse support, coercion would be the only way to govern the state (Easton, 1975:448).

Furthermore, political trust is largely considered in literature to consist of various objects towards the attitude of support and trust can be held by the citizens. The recognition of the object of political trust was first emphasised by Easton (1976) and the objects were tied into the specific and diffuse support dimensions explored by Easton (1975). These objects include the political authorities, the regime and the political community (Easton, 1975:435). The political authorities refer to the political elites who are holding office; this object of support focuses on specific individuals. Support for the regime includes support for state institutions, processes and the principles of the state. Lastly, support for the political community refers to attachment to the state that extends beyond the political actors or regime and is described as identifying as being South African, for example. The presence of political trust within a population would mean that its members feel like their own interests are being attended to by the political authorities. Trust in the regime would manifest through the people's satisfaction in the various processes that help to run the state (Easton, 1975:447; Dalton, 2014:257).

The distinction between the different objects of political support is important because of the different effects that low levels of political support can have (Muller and Jukam, 1977:1563). The regime and political community are described as objects of diffuse support, while political actors are objects of specific support (Criado and Herreros, 2007:1512–1513; Dalton, 2014:257-258). The objects of diffuse support are essential to the functioning of a democracy. The deep-seated reservoir of political trust (diffuse support) in the fundamental democratic

structures of the regime, its principles and the political community is difficult to regain once lost, in comparison to specific support (Dalton 2004:157–159; Dalton, 2014:257-258). Dalton (1998:1–2) emphasises that distrust of political incumbents is healthy and normal in a democratic system, but that political distrust of democratic institutions will have negative implications in such a system.

Despite the wide use of Easton's (1975) framework, there are some critiques of the framework, which relate to the measurement of the distinction of the objects of political support (Muller and Jukam, 1977:1563). The criticism largely relates to the measurement indicators of the various objects, and how, in literature, it is evident that not all citizens operationalise the objects of support in the same way, with various authors focusing on different indicators (Loewenberg, 1971:183–185; Easton, 1975:439–444; Citrin, McClosky, Shanks, and Sniderman:1975:14–15).

Another criticism refers to how citizens understand the conceptual distinction of objects of political trust. In Easton's (1975) framework, the objects of political support are argued to be conceptually distinct, although it cannot be known whether the objects of political support are conceptually distinct in the minds of survey respondents (Citrin *et al.*, 1975:14–15; Muller and Jukam, 1977:1563). Furthermore, it is emphasised that even if citizens view the various objects of political support as conceptually distinct, there is a high correlation between the two interrelated dimensions of diffuse and specific support, as well as the fact that indicators of the objects of political support can overlap, which will negatively influence the results of the statistical tests run on the survey data (Loewenberg, 1971:183–185; Easton, 1975:439–444; Citrin *et al.*, 1975:14–15; Muller and Jukam, 1977:1563).

2.2.2 A revision of Easton's conceptual framework

The use of political objects to measure political support and trust is widespread in the literature. Although, a wide variety of indicators have been utilised with regards to the operationalisation of political trust. Some examples of the diverse range of survey item indicators include support for various policies, evaluations of political actors, as well as trust in the regime and institutions which has created measurement inconsistencies within the literature (Marien, 2011:10-13). One key example of this is the Miller (1974) and Citrin (1974) debate, the authors debated what political object was conceptually measured, whether the results showcased a loss of specific support or a loss of diffuse support.

In response to Easton's (1975) longstanding political trust conceptualisation, Norris (1999) offers an alternative conceptual framework of political trust, which nevertheless utilises Easton's work as a foundation. Norris (1999) emphasises various critiques of Easton's (1975) conceptual development of political trust. It is argued by Norris (1999) that the citizens of a state do not adequately distinguish between the various objects of political trust that were previously identified by Easton. The main critique presented by Norris (1999) is that citizens distinguish between more objects of political trust than those identified by Easton (1975). Norris (1999) suggests that citizens distinguish between their national identity, the way in which the regime functions, democratic values and the regime's principles as well as political actions. This implies that Easton's (1975) conceptualisation of diffuse support involves more layers than those previously envisaged.

This distinction made by Norris (1999) results in citizens having varying layers of political trust, where citizens are able to hold critical attitudes towards political incumbents and the way in which the state is functioning, but are still able to hold a trusting attitude towards democratic values (Norris, 1999:10-12). Building on this link between measuring political support and political trust, the current research was based on a conceptual framework of political trust that consisted of five levels.

In Norris' (1999:7–13) expansion on Easton's framework, the first level relates to the political community. This level refers to citizens' attachment to a common political identity that transcends the various state institutions that are currently present in the country (Easton, 1975:444; Norris, 1999:7–8). An example of this is 'feeling South African'. The second level refers to the principles of the regime and the values that underscore a democratic state. These are sometimes contested, as different states choose to prioritise different values, but, overall, the basic values that have been emphasised consist of political tolerance, participation and respect for state institutions and the rule of law. Both objects measure diffuse support towards the political system. The third level of Norris' framework relates to the performance of the regime. This level relates to citizens' experiences with the regime's functioning and whether the regime has delivered to meet their needs. This level also measures an aspect of specific support.

The fourth level relates to democratic institutions and the confidence that citizens hold in these various institutions, which include Parliament, the executive, legal institutions, political parties and the media. The fifth level measures the confidence that is held in political actors and

incumbents that are positioned in these institutions (Easton, 1975:444–445; Norris, 1999:9–16).

Norris' (1999) framework has been critiqued by authors. Levi and Stoker (2000:497–498) emphasise interpretation challenges in the fivefold framework, mainly relating to how one would understand the findings if political trust in a political institution declines although there is still a high degree of support for the regime. Furthermore, it is possible that citizens do not view the five levels as conceptually distinct; they might blur the categories, and judgement of one category might be interlinked with another. It is also arguable whether all the identified categories in the framework are objects. According to Levi and Stoker (2000:497–498), trust can only be considered to be relevant if the object is an actual object, such as a political institution.

In recent years, there has been a documented continual decrease in political trust in advanced democracies and an increase in citizens who hold a degree of scepticism towards the state. This decline in political trust has raised the question of what can be considered 'enough' trust within a democratic state (Levi and Stoker, 2000:497–498). These sceptical citizens have been termed 'critical citizens' by Norris (1999). Critical citizens are those citizens who, while they are still committed to the values of democracy, are underwhelmed by and dissatisfied with the performance of the regime; they are more likely to challenge the actions of the state and do not have an unquestionable allegiance to it (Norris, 1999:14–17). The decrease in political trust can therefore not be considered its totality, but rather as new dynamic in a democratic state related to the modern era, where although there is a decrease in political trust, there is still a large commitment to democratic norms and values (Norris, 1999:269; Dalton, 2014:252–255).

2.2.3 The causes and consequences of political trust

The concept of political trust is argued to be a central value in a democratic state and is responsible for demonstrating the support that the citizens hold for the democratic system as well as motivating citizens to accept the choices of the state, even when these choices are considered to be unpopular (Easton, 1975:447-448). Political trust can demonstrate the political support that citizens hold for a political system; furthermore, this support for the political system forms the basis of the state's legitimacy (Hetherington, 1998:803–804; Levi and Stoker, 2000:501).

The citizens of a democratic political system can be considered more likely to obey the requirements and rules of a state if the political institutions and actors are perceived to be

legitimate. Moreover, when citizens are distrustful of the political actors and institutions, this can be argued to undermine their perception of the state's legitimacy (Muller and Jukam, 1977:1563; Hetherington, 1998:803-804; Norris, 1999:263–264; Dalton, 2004:165–169). The environment of distrust can create an environment where difficulties are created with regard to the ability of political incumbents to govern the democratic state (Hetherington, 1998:803–804; Marien and Hooghe, 2011:268–270).

Increased levels of political distrust could therefore hold negative implications for the democratic system in its entirety, as a democracy gains its legitimacy indirectly through political trust (Norris, 1999:2; Bratton and Mattes, 2001:447; Rose, 2007:124; Fukuyama, 2015:12). Political trust that citizens could have in a government implies a type of social contract that is conducive to democracy, where democratic leaders are chosen, and can be removed, through popular sovereignty. Therefore, the expectations and experiences of the citizens regarding government are central aspects of a democratic system. How the citizens perceive government and its actions could therefore influence the trust that the citizens have in government; some examples of this include citizens perceiving a government to be corrupt or service delivery to be of a low quality (Hetherington, 1998:803–804; Bratton and Mattes, 2001:447–449; Mishler and Rose, 2001:56).

With regard to the formation of political trust, two key schools of thought exist. These are the cultural and the institutional schools of thought, both based on the premise that democratic values are required to be socialised into citizens (Mishler and Rose 2001:30–31).

The cultural school of thought emphasises that political trust beliefs are socialised over a long period outside of the political realm and become the democratic norm over time. This creation of trust is socialised, and citizens will be taught it from a young age and then project it onto democratic institutions (Easton, 1975:448; Mishler and Rose 2001:30–31). The institutional school of thought, meanwhile, emphasises the performance of the various political institutions with regard to the formation of political trust. The better the institutions and actors perform, the higher the degree of trust that is offered towards them. Political trust or distrust is therefore a consequence of their performance (Mishler and Rose 2001:30–31). The performance of government has largely emerged as a key factor that sways political trust and has been emphasised by various authors (e.g. Inglehart, 1999; Klingemann, 1999; McAllister, 1999; Miller and Listhtaug, 1999; Newton, 1999; Norris, 1999; Rohrschneider, 2002; Dalton, 2004).

The vast majority of research relating to the factors that influence political trust consists of case studies of a single country (Criado and Herreros, 2007:1513). This focus on case studies and country-specific factors has led to Criado and Herreros (2007:1513–1515) questioning the conclusions that have been drawn about the variables that have been identified as shaping political support and political trust, and their comparability to other factors in other states. Although, Criado and Herreros (2007:1513–1515) emphasise that the limited amount of cross-national studies can, in part, be attributed to the absence of comparable data. Furthermore, it must be emphasised that political trust is swayed largely by country-specific factors, such as the history and the political and economic environment in the state (Zmerli and Hooghe, 2011).

Furthermore, in recent years there has been a documented decrease of political trust in advanced democracies and an increase of citizens who hold a degree of scepticism towards the state. An example is data collected from the Harris poll, in 1966 29% of Americans thought that the 'government does not care about you' and in 2011 a total of 72% of Americans shared this opinion (Dalton, 2014:260-261). Furthermore, a decline in trust in political institutions was witnessed over that same time period as well as support for the democratic regime (Dalton, 2014:260-265). This decline of political trust has caused the question to be raised with regard to what can be considered as 'enough' trust within a democratic state as well as further expanded political trust research (Miller, 1974:971; Mishler and Rose, 1997:419; Newton and Norris, 2000:11; Levi and Stoker, 2000:475–476). However, this largely accepted decline in political trust is challenged by authors such as Marien (2011:25–26), who found in a study that there was no measurable decrease in political trust in European states.

The visible decrease in political trust across advanced democracies has resulted in two divergent schools of thought. The first school argues that the decrease in political trust is cause for concern and can be considered to be a crisis of democracy (Marien and Hooghe, 2011:268–269). It is argued by authors that the decrease in political trust has not only formed with regard to political actors such as politicians, but also towards basic democratic institutions and procedures. The rise of political distrust has therefore penetrated the deep-seated reservoir of democratic support that is considered necessary for the survival of democracy (Easton, 1975:444; Marien and Hooghe, 2011:268–269). Scholars whose research supports this school and who therefore emphasise that the decreasing levels of political trust can be considered a cause of concern include Putnam (2002), Dalton (2004), and Putnam and Pharr (2000).

The second school of thought is not as widely emphasised as the first. This school of thought argues that the decreasing levels of political trust can offer various benefits to a democratic state, and therefore underlines a divergent interpretation (Norris, 1999:1–4; Cook and Gronke, 2005:801; Hardin, 2006:159–160; Marien and Hooghe, 2011:268–269). Norris (1999) is a key scholar in this school of thought and has coined the concept of sceptical citizens as 'critical citizens'. The rise of critical citizens can offer advancement of the democratic political system, as it forces the various political actors to respond to the demands of the population with a higher degree of receptiveness (Marien and Hooghe, 2011:268–269). Furthermore, it can be argued that critical citizens instigate a level of quality control with regard to democratic governance, as the distrust held by the citizens towards the state may cause the state to be more reactive to public demands and may play a role in keeping political actors accountable (Norris, 1999; Inglehart, 1999:233–258; Cook and Gronke, 2005:800–802; Hardin, 2006:158–162; Marien and Hooghe, 2011:268–269). The primary benefits caused by sceptical citizens, therefore, relate to increasing the quality of democracy and instigating reforms in the democratic state.

There is an important distinction that should be noted in the second school of thought. This distinction relates to the objects of political trust, as highlighted by Easton (1965; 1975). The long-seated reservoir of diffuse support for a democratic regime on a systematic level relates to democratic institutions, principles and the community and must therefore remain, but the support and trust in political actors are what is considered to be beneficial for the democratic state (Easton, 1965; 1975; Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995:2–4; Norris, 1999; Dalton, 2004:158–160; Marien and Hooghe, 2011:269–271).

Although some level of political mistrust may be essential to democracy (Muller and Jukam, 1977:1563; Hetherington, 1998:803–804), the debate between the above mentioned two schools of thought is also connected to another debate in literature regarding how high the levels of political trust must be within a democratic state to ensure its success and stability. The traditional view of this largely ties into the first school of thought. In this situation, a decrease in the levels of political trust causes negative consequences for a democratic political system. The core assumption of the traditional school of thought relates to the hypothesised difficulty that political incumbents are likely to have in implementing regulations with a distrustful citizenry (Easton, 1965:96–99; Marien and Hooghe, 2011:268–270).

The traditional standpoint in literature relates to political trust requiring a deep-seated diffuse reservoir of political trust within a democratic political system to create a supportive

democratic culture for a democratic state to survive. This is emphasised in the key works of Easton (1965; 1975) and Almond and Verba (1963). Almond and Verba (1963) show the importance of a supportive democratic culture with regard to the impact of citizens' orientations on the stability and performance of the democratic regime. Moreover, various studies have found empirical evidence to support this claim. It is emphasised by several authors that citizens are more likely to regard the requirements of the state if they consider the government to be trustworthy, as it is considered the 'right thing to do' and will benefit the political community as a whole. As well as expending more effort and resources towards the state to attain policy goals, it was therefore found that the citizens were more likely to pay their taxes without evasion if they held a higher degree of trust in government (Scholz and Lubell, 1998; Chanley *et al*., 2000; Levi and Stoker, 2000; Dalton, 2004; Grimes, 2008; Marien and Hooghe, 2011).

The debate relating to the absence of political trust is critiqued by Marien and Hooghe (2011:268–269). These authors argue that this debate is being conducted without the existence of reliable information and knowledge about the potential consequences of decreased levels of political trust and that it is not yet known whether decreasing levels of political trust will have a negative effect on a democratic political system (Marien and Hooghe, 2011:268–270).

Despite the view of decreased political trust playing a beneficial role in a democratic state, there is empirical research that emphasises the consequences of decreasing political trust within a democratic political system (Marien and Hooghe, 2011:272).

The link between political trust, diffuse support and political legitimacy must be further explored and emphasised. Political trust and political legitimacy are distinct, yet interwoven concepts (Easton, 1975:499-450). Political legitimacy is defined as "when people believe it is right and proper to accept and obey the authorities and abide by the requirements of the regime" (Easton, 1975:451). The interrelation of political trust and legitimacy can be emphasised, as citizens would most likely not consider a democratic regime to be legitimate if they held attitudes of distrust of the regime (Easton, 1975:451-452).

2.3 POLITICAL TRUST IN SOUTH AFRICA

As emphasised above, the political context of a country plays a significant role in shaping political trust. This context arises from the economic and political landscape and happenings in a state, as well as the historical trajectory (Zmerli and Hooghe, 2011:1–5). Mattes (2002:28–29) argues that "a country's political culture does not develop in a vacuum. Rather, it is against

a background of economic and political trends and developments that public opinion about a democratic regime, a political system, and citizenship must be assessed and understood". The political context in South Africa has been largely explored amongst the political trust research in South Africa.

Factors relating to political trust and democratic attitudes in South Africa were explored and emphasised by a variety of authors (e.g. Gire, 1999; Friedman, 2005; Lane and Ersson, 2007; Askvik, 2008; 2010; Chingwete, 2016; Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016; Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017; Mantzaris *et al*., 2017). Mattes (2002:22) identified three broad factors, through a cross analysis of literature, that are instrumental in ensuring democratic consolidation. These include an economy in a state that is growing as well as aiding in reducing the poverty in the state, political institutions that are stable and predictable, and a supportive political culture (Mattes, 2002:22–23). This author argues that South Africa, as a democracy, showed aspects of ill-health in the state due to all three of these identified broad factors being undermined or absent (Mattes, 2002:22–23). Following Easton's (1975) political support framework of diffuse and specific support, Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws (2017:203) identified a variety of factors that play a role in shaping political support in South Africa.

With regard to diffuse support, the ANC has held political power in South Africa since the transition to a democratic state in 1994. The ANC has gathered a large majority of the vote in all national elections and in many provincial elections, as well as policy domination. The political landscape in South Africa has been characterised as a dominant party system. It is argued that in a dominant party system, there is less division between the incumbent political actors and party and the democratic values and political institutions that uphold a democratic state; therefore, the lines dividing the 'replaceable' political actors and the foundations of the democratic state can become blurred in the eyes of citizens. The South African state is characterised by one-party dominance through the ANC as well as challenges with regard to state accountability (Gire, 1999:1–4; Mattes, 2002:23; Butler, 2005:735–736; Friedman, 2005:757–758; Lane and Ersson, 2007:219; Askvik, 2010:30–32; Chingwete, 2016:1–2; Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:14–15; Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017:208; Mantzaris *et al.*, 2017:81;).

Authors, such as Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg (2016:14–15) also emphasise the existence of various factors that could affect diffuse support for the South African government, such as corruption and a lack of service delivery. Corruption can negatively affect a state in various

ways, including the social and economic growth of the state. The relationship between President Zuma and the Gupta family was emphasised as an example of state corruption, as state income was drawn towards the Gupta family. Some other examples of corruption include the embezzling of state funds and rigging of tenders. Furthermore, with regard to service delivery in South Africa, it is clear that citizens do not feel that it is adequate; between 2008 and 2013, for example, there was an estimated total of over 3 000 service delivery protests in South Africa (Askvik, 2010:30–32; Hutchison and Johnson, 2011:739; Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:14–15; Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017:208; Mantzaris *et al*., 2017:81).

Another contextual matter relating to diffuse support in South Africa is the state's perceived disregard for the Chapter 9 institutions and processes recommended to government. An example of this was the disregard of the report of the former public protector, Thuli Madonsela, which found that the upgrades at former President Zuma's private residence at Nkandla were a wasteful spend of taxpayers' money as well as a disregard for procurement processes. The findings of the report were made in spite of Zuma's denial of the overspending. The costs of the upgrade were R246 million. Furthermore, the committee appointed by Zuma to investigate the report found that there was no wrongdoing on his part. This disregard for Chapter 9 institutions, according to Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws (2017:209), could reflect a shift towards a state where the rights of minorities may be overlooked, which undermines the effectiveness of a democratic state, as it is essential that minorities believe that their rights are protected and respected (Chingwete, 2016:1–2; Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:14–15; Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017:209).

Furthermore, South Africa is a deeply divided society in terms of race and class (Bratton and Mattes, 2001:455). Apartheid in South Africa resulted in the political, social and economic exclusion of the vast majority of South Africans and has had long-lasting effects on the state. The consequences of apartheid include a negative effect on South Africa's democratic transition as well as the creation of a supportive political culture, as a democratic political culture in South Africa had to be built from the foundation up (Gibson, 2003:796–797).

Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws (2017:209) also emphasise the rise of populism and racial polarisation in shaping diffuse support, such as the rise of the EFF in the South African political landscape. The EFF has been accused of inciting racial divergence in South Africa. The political party also disrupted Parliament in 2014, which caused Parliament to be unable to

function and necessitated police involvement with regard to the removal of some party members. The emergence of this political party can be regarded as a reaction to elite politics and to the marginalisation of the poor, because economically South Africa has suffered from high unemployment rates, inequality and low economic growth rates (Mattes, 2002:23; Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:14–15; Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017:209).

With regard to specific support towards the political leaders in South Africa, Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws (2017:209–210) emphasise a variety of instances, within the 10-year period of their study, where the actions of political incumbents may have affected the attitude of political support. The authors emphasise how specific support became more important in the political landscape after Nelson Mandela's presidency, due to his undisputed role as a struggle icon (Friedman, 1999:837; Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017:209–210). Mbeki was viewed as aloof and removed from African citizens; moreover, his denial of the link between HIV and AIDS led to a higher death toll and a shortage of antiretrovirals in South Africa. Zuma ascended to power in South Africa after Mbeki was recalled as president. Zuma's presidency introduced a populist dynamic into politics as well as an emphasis on party loyalty, even over democratic values in some instances (Mattes, 2002:31–32; Askvik, 2010:26–27; Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:14–15; Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017:209–210).

Lane and Ersson (2007:234–235) emphasise two main processes in South Africa that contribute towards a supportive democratic culture despite the various factors that negatively influence political trust. The first is the existence of vibrant and active civil society organisations that exist as a check and balance towards the dominant political party. The civil society organisations in existence in South Africa include trade unions, grassroots organisations and non-governmental organisations (Mattes, 2002:23; Lane and Ersson, 2007:234–235). The second is the existence of a democratic institutional framework that would work to protect and act as a check and balance regarding the democratic processes in South Africa.

Askvik (2010:38–40) aimed to further explore the dynamics of political trust within South Africa and whether this political trust is formed through performance-based or identity-based evaluations. The author argues that both these hypotheses regarding the influence of political trust within South Africa are relevant at all points in time. Regarding the performance hypothesis, the author argues that citizens' perceptions of the regime shape their attitudes towards political institutions. The performance of the regime was found to largely sway the attitudes of political trust held by citizens due to South Africa's transition from an authoritarian

state to a democratic state (Askvik, 2010:38–40). Chingwete (2016:1–2) also found supporting evidence that political trust levels were interrelated with state performance; citizens who trusted government were more likely to identify that government was performing well, whereas citizens who viewed government as corrupt were less likely to trust the state (Chingwete, 2016:1–2). This was evident, for example, in 2015, when there were several political scandals in South Africa, such as the Nkandla inquiry. The political trust held by citizens towards then President Zuma decreased significantly from 62% to 34% – a significant decrease with regard to the citizens' confidence in the president (Chingwete, 2016:1–2).

Evidence was also found to support the identity hypothesis regarding the attitudes of political trust and support; both partisanship and racial identity played a large role in influencing and explaining the attitude of political trust within South Africa. It is emphasised that the influence of identity on political trust is indicative of South Africa's history and is learnt through socialisation. The ANC, for example, is seen as an anti-apartheid struggle icon in the South African political landscape as well as a symbol of success relating to the resistance movement against apartheid. Askvik (2008:536; 2010:38–40) argues that this provides the South African political system and its institution with an undercurrent of diffuse support. Furthermore, Gibson (2003:796–797) found that, in South Africa, the social identity of citizens was the best determinant of political support towards democratic processes and institutions; this was especially true with regard to the racial groups in South Africa. Due to the supporting evidence of the two schools of thought relating to influencing political trust, it is argued that the two hypotheses should be viewed as complementing each other in the South African political landscape (Askvik, 2008:536).

Furthermore, economic conditions and personal financial situations were also found to shape the political trust attitudes of South African citizens (Askvik, 2008:536–537; 2010:38–40). Many South Africans are not satisfied with the economic state of the country, which in turn effects political trust (Bratton and Mattes, 2001:458; Askvik, 2008:536–537; 2010:38–40).

Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws (2017:223) investigated levels of political trust and support in South Africa over a 10-year period. The authors found that, despite the high levels of diffuse support in the early years of South Africa's democracy, there was a decrease in both diffuse support and specific support in the country. Moreover, this decline worsened greatly between the years 2006 and 2014 (Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017:223–224). The authors utilised Norris' (1999) conceptual framework regarding the objects of political trust and found a

decrease in political support in objects relating to diffuse support. The authors argue that this decline in diffuse support may have a negative effect on a democratic state, especially a newly democratic state such as South Africa, which is still in the process of consolidating its democracy (Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017:223).

Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws (2017:223–224) also researched the link between reconciliation and political trust within South Africa. Reconciliation is an especially relevant topic in the South African political landscape after apartheid (Friedman, 1999:841; Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017:223–224). Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws (2017:223–224) emphasise that the decrease in diffuse political support within all the objects of political support identified by Norris (1999) should be concerning with regard to reconciliation. Furthermore, Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws (2017:223–224) show that this is especially true with regard to the political community, as this object emphasises an attachment to nation building and reconciliation. This decrease in political trust regarding the political community contrasts with what was found by Mattes (2002:29), whose study was conducted many years before. Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws (2017) found that the object of trust, the political community, is largely supported in South Africa, with 90% of South Africans identifying as proud to be considered South African.

Trust in political institutions in South Africa has been researched by various authors and it was mainly found that political trust in political institutions in the country had declined over the years since democratisation (Mattes, 2002:31–32; Catterberg and Moreno, 2005:38–39; Chingwete, 2016:9–10; Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws, 2017:223–224; Mantzaris *et al.*, 2017:81). Catterberg and Moreno (2005:38–39) found that the decrease in citizens' confidence in the political institutions in South Africa was a pattern that was shared with other new democracies, such as Turkey and South Korea.

Furthermore, it was found by Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg (2016:25–26) and Chingwete (2016:1–2) that South African citizens have a greater attitude of trust in political institutions that are considered to be non-partisan and independent, such as the Public Protector's Office, the courts, the South African Revenue Services (SARS) and the NPA. Independent Media in South Africa was the only institution among 18 to have shown a large increase in the attitude of political trust, as political trust in the media increased from 69% in 2011 to 79% in 2015. The media is also widely trusted, with 75% of citizens recognising an attitude of political trust in the media (Chingwete, 2016:1–2).

Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg (2016:25–26) also found little evidence that citizens differentiate their judgements regarding the political institutions and the political incumbents who currently hold office. Citizens' attitude of political trust in political institutions is therefore influenced by their support of the political incumbent. The authors emphasise that this lack of distinction between the various objects of political support shows a prolonged attitude of distrust and discontent towards political actors and their actions, and that this prolonged discontent has begun to erode support for other objects of political trust. The trust evaluations relating to the ANC were also largely linked to the evaluations of institutions; this is argued to be caused by the prolonged stay of the ANC in power in South Africa and the existence of a dominant party system (Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:25–26).

Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg (2016:25–26) suggest that there is a high proportion of citizens, approximately two-thirds of their sample, who are critical citizens in South Africa and offer conditional support to the majority of political institutions. It is argued by the authors that the overall South African population is therefore largely led by performance evaluations and instrumental reasoning with regard to the political actors in terms of forming an attitude of political support or trust. This is likely to play a role in strengthening democracy (Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:25–27).

Furthermore, Gibson (2003:796) found that the political culture in South Africa is not highly supportive of democratic values and that there is a low amount of political support in the democratic processes and institutions in the country. There are many civil society organisations in existence, such as trade unions, grassroots organisations and non-governmental organisations; despite this, South Africans are not entirely supportive of democratic rule in the state and there are low levels of political participation (Mattes, 2002:23).

Gibson (2003:796–797) found that the influence of education on support for democratic values and processes is divergent to that of other developing states, such as those in eastern Europe, where education has been positively associated with increased democratic support. In South Africa, education has not been associated with support for democratic values among all races, except for white people. The author emphasises the long-lasting impact of the dismal apartheid education system on democratic learning among South African citizens. Historically, white students were prioritised compared to students of other races, and this is argued to potentially play a role in shaping the support for democratic processes and institutions.

Compared to other states in Africa, South Africans were less satisfied regarding democracy (Bratton and Mattes, 2001:458). Furthermore, it was found that South African citizens largely view democracy materialistically rather than intrinsically in comparison to other African states. Where the citizens ask what democracy can provide economically rather than be supportive of democracy because of the values that are inherently attached to a democratic state, such as freedom of speech for example. This understanding of democracy can result in less satisfaction with the political system if it does not provide enough political goods and services for citizens. This democratic understanding implies a more conditional support allocated towards a democratic state (Bratton and Mattes, 2001:461). Furthermore, support for and commitment to democratic values in South Africa were found to be the lowest in comparison to other states in Africa. More than half of South African citizens emphasised that they would give up democracy if a political leader could, in return, reduce unemployment and provide housing (Bratton and Mattes, 2001:458).

It should be noted that Bratton and Mattes (2001:461) emphasise that the wording of questions could play a role in manipulating the results tapped with regard to South Africans' support for democracy. Where the question that probed this attitude did not have a neutral option, once the neutral option was added, it was found that many citizens chose this option in comparison to being unsatisfied with democracy.

2.4 THE MASS MEDIA AND POLITICAL TRUST

2.4.1 The theorised role of the media in a democratic state

In recent years, there has been a great expansion of mass media in democratic societies, resulting in the various forms of mass media becoming readily accessible to large portions of the citizenry (Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995:2–8; Curran, 2002:4–7; Aarts *et al*., 2011:3). This increase in media was long theorised to play an important role in strengthening democracy (Curran, 2002:4–5; Avery, 2009:410). In literature, the role of the media in a democratic state can be largely divided into two themes, namely the role of the media in developed Western states and the role of the media in democratically transitioning and consolidating states. This section explores the role of the media in democratic states and in democratising states to be.

Regarding advanced democratic political systems, theoretically it is agreed upon in literature that a democratic state requires a free and functioning mass media sector (Sparks, 2011:5–6). The mass media in a democratic state ties into two key democratic values, namely the freedom of expression and the freedom of choice. Moreover, the mass media is argued to be one of the

causes of the individual modernisation of citizenry, in conjunction with other forces, such as that of technology and the economic sector in a state (Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995:2–8; Aarts *et al*., 2011:3). It is argued that the media has a variety of influential functions to fulfil in a democratic state (Berman and Witzner, 1997; Curran, 2002; McQuail, 2005; McNair, 2009).

The mass media in a state acts as a check and balance towards the state. The media is therefore considered to have a watchdog function, where the political elites' actions are examined with regard to curbing power excesses. The mass media monitors the state's actions and therefore plays a role in exposing corruption or power excesses to the citizens of the democratic state. This role of the media also emphasises the necessary separation of the media and the state in a democratic political system, where private and state forms of mass media are recognised as important (Curran, 2002:217–218; McNair, 2009:238:240).

One of the primary and most important functions of the mass media in a democratic state relates to knowledge and information diffusion from the state towards citizens (McCombs and Shaw, 1972:176; Berman and Witzner, 1997:1313–1316; McNair, 2009:238:240; Aarts *et al*., 2011:3). Furthermore, the media can also act as a two-way stream of information, not only from the political elites towards citizens, but also in showcasing the assertions of the public and therefore providing an avenue for citizens to reach the state regarding various issues (Berman and Witzner, 1997:1313–1316; McNair, 2009:238:240; Aarts *et al*., 2011:3). The mass media assists in "providing a voice for those who cannot normally be heard in public" (Randall, 2000:3). The mass media can therefore contribute to the well-being of citizens in a democratic state by advocating on various issues deemed to be important by the latter (McNair, 2009:239:244).

Due to the consistent stream of information towards the citizenry, the mass media in a democratic state is recognised as playing a role in shaping the political attitudes and beliefs of citizens (Moy *et al.*, 1999:139; Putnam, Pharr and Dalton, 2000:23–25; Chen and Shi, 2001:85; Mattes, 2012:136; Chen and Guo, 2013:136). This function of the media is articulated by Moy *et al*. (1999:139), who state that the "users of particular media tend to perceive democratic institutions as depicted by these sources and make their judgments accordingly". The mass media is argued to effect the satisfaction and confidence that citizens hold towards the state; it can therefore form the foundation of the judgements that citizens place on the state and its various institutions, actors and actions (Putnam, Pharr and Dalton, 2000:23–25; Chen and Shi, 2001:85; Chen and Guo, 2013:136).

Furthermore, mass media institutions are theoretically emphasised to promote and inspire a supportive democratic culture in a state, as they form an information link between the political elites and the citizens of a state. The productions of mass media institutions are regarded as critical in informing citizens' judgements of the state (Ceron, 2015:488). Therefore, the mass media can be described as a democratic socialising agent (Ndlovu, 2008:70). The media is argued to play a role in promoting democratic norms and values in a state through consistent news coverage of the political events and aspects in the political system, such as the national elections (Gans, 2002:2–4). Dalton (2006:20–21) describes television as playing an important role in the cognitive mobilisation of citizens.

The mass media also provides intellectual stimulation to the members of a democratic society. The media provides a base to stimulate debate and a platform where debate among journalists and various news agencies can take place, which could then influence public opinion (Curran, 2002:17–18). The media is often considered to play an important role in the development of citizens' political and civic engagement with the state (Wasserman and Garman, 2014:392).

The mass media in a democratic state is largely theoretically emphasised to play a positive role in a state transitioning towards a democratic regime (White, 1994:250–255; Suarez, 1996:49; Berger, 1998:602–604; Jebril *et al*., 2013:2–3;), although it is emphasised that the role of the media in democratically transitioning and consolidating states is less clearly defined that that of the media in advanced democracies. Literature on the media and its role in states that are transitioning towards or consolidating democracy is mostly from a Western perspective. Moreover, the actual impact of the media in these states is contested (Sparks, 2011:10–12; Jebril *et al*., 2013:2).

It is argued by some authors that the mass media in a state plays an integral role in providing a platform that allows for the spread of new ideas and attitudes, as well as a connection to the worldwide communications system. Furthermore, exposure to mass media in developing states can play a role in showcasing new technology that is available in more developed states (White, 1994:250–255; Berger, 1998:602–604).

Moreover, the issue of media penetration must be emphasised, as not everyone has equal access to the various forms of mass media that are present. In Western states, for example, access to various media platforms is largely equal among members of society, whereas in developing states, citizens who live in more rural areas have less access to the variety of mass media

platforms available (Ansah, 1994:231–233; Berger, 1998:602–603). This limited access could therefore dilute the effect of the media in a democratic state.

The role of the transitioned media in a newly democratic state to allow for larger degrees of freedom of expression and a higher quality of information sources cannot be considered to be simple or always positive (Jebril *et al*., 2013:2–3). The mass media in a newly democratic state or transitioning state is said to be interrelated with the advancements and fall-backs of the state (Suarez, 1996:49; Jebril *et al*., 2013:2–3). Furthermore, Jebril, Stetka and Loveless (2013:2–3) state that "it is often difficult to separate what is being claimed about the impact of media on the institution-building process from broader assessments of their democratic qualities or contribution to democratisation in general". A gap in the literature was identified by these authors, who argue that there is little research relating to how the mass media fulfils its prescribed role in a democratic state consolidating its democratic regime (Jebril *et al*., 2013:2–3).

Jebril, Stetka and Loveless (2013:2–3) found that there are inconsistent results on the effect of the media in enforcing political accountability through 'watchdog' journalism in states transitioning to democracy (Suarez, 1996:49; Jebril *et al*., 2013:2–3). Jebril *et al*. (2013:2–3) also found evidence of the mass media's link to democratisation in Latin America and Arabic states, where the media positively shaped the democratic transitioning of states. However, the mass media has been argued to have had a significant influence in shaping as well as consolidating democratic processes in Africa (Tettey, 2001:5). This sentiment is also shared by Berger (1998:600–603) in his research into the mass media and its effect on democratisation in southern African states.

Sparks (2011:10–12) emphasises the role of context in the media in transitional states; for example, in some states, the media has pushed the state in a democratic direction, but in other states, it has not. Factors such as the national context and who controls the media are important to consider in terms of the role of the media in a democratic transition.

2.4.2 The effect of the media on political trust

Literature on the effect of media usage on political trust is characterised by two divergent schools of thought (Avery, 2009:424; Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–2; Ceron, 2015:487–489; Strömbäck *et al*., 2016:89–90). Therefore, the literature is not in agreement about the sway that media usage has on political trust and is split between two counter-viewpoints with regard to the relationship between media consumption and political trust. There is largely agreement in

literature that political trust can be shaped by media consumption, but the direction of this influence is hotly debated (Brosius, Van Elsas and De Vreese, 2019:450).

Hypothesis 1 was that a high frequency of media usage will have a negative effect on citizens' levels of political trust. This school of thought is termed 'media malaise'. Hypothesis 2 states that a high frequency of media usage will have a positive sway on political trust, and this school of thought is termed the 'virtuous circle' (Elenbaas and De Vreese, 2008:551–552; Avery, 2009:411–412; Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–2; Ceron, 2015:487–489; Strömbäck *et al*., 2016:89–90). Empirical evidence appears to support both schools of thought in various national contexts. However, the importance of different national contexts must be emphasised, as this influences what is reported in the mass media (Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–2; Strömbäck *et al*., 2016:89–90). Furthermore, it must be stated that the majority of the empirical research is based in the United States of America (USA) or advanced European democracies. Therefore, the ability of these schools of thought to be transferred to other national contexts, as well as their relevance in these contexts, is questioned (Aarts *et al*., 2011:4).

Regarding the media malaise school of thought, scholars have argued that a political malaise exists towards the political system in Western states (Ceron, 2015:487). Political news reported by the mass media plays a role in the development of this malaise in Western states (Robinson and Appel, 1979; Ranney, 1983; Moy *et al*., 1999; Scheufele and Moy, 1999; Newton, 1999; Pinkleton and Austin, 2001; Avery, 2009; Tworzecki and Semetko, 2012; Hanitzsch and Berganza, 2012; Ceron and Memoli, 2015; Brosius *et al*., 2019). This political malaise has promoted a renewed interest in researching the effect that the mass media has on a democratic culture. This school of thought argues that increased media engagement and consumption by citizens have a negative influence on the political trust held by citizens (Avery, 2009:411–412; Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–2). Despite the emphasis on media malaise in general, the negative impact of television news on political trust has been singled out by a variety of authors (e.g. Patterson, 1993; Cappella and Jamieson, 1997; Mutz and Reeves, 2005; Avery, 2009).

A key starting point of the media malaise school of thought was developed by Robinson (1975; 1976), who argued that an increase in exposure to television news broadcasts, specifically in the USA, caused an increase in cynicism towards political actors by citizens. This school of thought was then termed the 'video malaise school of thought' by Robinson (1975; 1976) and, although the author did not specifically research the concept of political trust, this hypothesis is one of the first works that emphasised the school of thought of media malaise. Other

researchers since Robinson have also researched the video malaise school of thought and found evidence supporting this school of thought (Mutz and Reeves, 2005:2–4; Avery, 2009:411–412; Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–3; Norris, 2011:1–4; Ceron, 2015:487–489). The video malaise school of thought emphasises that increased exposure to and consumption of television news would shape political confidence (Mutz and Reeves, 2005:2–4; Avery, 2009:411-412; Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–3) Although there was a large amount of evidence in support of the video malaise school of thought, some studies have found that television news was associated with a positive increase in political trust. For example, Gross, Aday and Brewer (2005:65) found that television news consumption after the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001 in the USA was positively associated with an increase in political trust.

In the video malaise school of thought there are two main interlinked hypotheses about the causes of the decrease in political trust through exposure to and consumption of television. They relate to what is being reported and what aspects of the news citizens choose to focus on. This school of thought identifies a negative focus of the citizenry and the media broadcasts as causing the hypothesised relationship (Mutz and Reeves, 2005:2–4; Elenbaas and De Vreese, 2008:551–552; Avery, 2009:411–412; Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–3).

The negative focus of the media in news broadcasts is a key emphasis in this school of thought (Mutz and Reeves, 2005:2–4; Avery, 2009:411–412; Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–3) It is argued in the video malaise hypothesis that what is being broadcast on television is highly selective and that there is a significant focus on the negative aspects in political systems, such as scandals, violence, conflict and sensational personal matters. This negative focus that is broadcast to the public causes apathy to arise among the citizenry (Mutz and Reeves, 2005:2–4; Avery, 2009:427; Aarts et al., 2011:1–3) This argument was first presented by Robinson (1975; 1976), who suggested that the news media's focus on negative aspects in the political system as well as an increased focus on conflict negatively shapes the political confidence that citizens hold in the state, especially during election periods.

Moreover, this negative focus in the television news is further exacerbated by an increase in incivility in the political realm (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 1995:147; Mutz and Reeves, 2005:1–2; Avery, 2009:411–413; Aarts *et al*., 2011:2–5). Mutz and Reeves (2005) found that the higher the incivility showcased in a political debate on television, the less trusting the citizenry is towards political actors, such as politicians.

It is argued in this school of thought that citizens themselves also place more focus on the negative aspects of the political system. News consumption or exposure that is associated with negative aspects of the political system has a negative influence on political attitudes (Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–3). Political psychology has emphasised the more dominant role that negative information plays in forming an opinion or attitude (Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes, 1960:554–556; Easton, 1965:182–185; Lau, 1985:353–357; Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–3). Moreover, this is argued to be true even if citizens are exposed to and engage with a completely unbiased media report. Citizens will tend to place a higher focus on the negative aspects in the political realm. This thought process, therefore, emphasises that media usage will more likely cause a decrease in the attitude of political trust of citizens (Easton, 1965:182–188). Elenbaas and De Vreese (2008:550) termed the negativity focus by the citizens and the media the 'circle of cynicism', which emphasises the negativity focus in the media malaise school of thought.

Regarding the linkage between the other types of media platforms and television news, it is emphasised that due to the easy nature of accessing political news through television, other types of media have had to change and, in a sense, copy what could be copied from the television style of reporting political news (Sigelman and Bullock, 1991:5–10; Newton, 1999:579–580; Mutz and Reeves, 2005:2–4).

The media malaise school of thought was further researched and tested empirically by various authors following its development by Robinson (1975; 1976) and it was also applied to other types of mass media. The video malaise school of thought heavily emphasises the lessening of quality with regard to television quality, an overall negative bias by the media and an increased focus on the flaws of political actors and electoral candidates. This school of thought emphasises how journalists and television news media broadcasts have changed the general way in which political news has been delivered to the public, where a higher degree of interpretation by journalists is observable as opposed to the plain presentation of political news (Hallin, 1992:5–10; Jamieson, 1992; Johnston, Hagen and Jamieson, 2004; Mutz and Reeves, 2005:2–4; Avery, 2009:411–412; Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–3).

Despite the focus on television, specifically, in literature, a few scholars have emphasised that television affects the political trust of the citizenry in a completely unique style (Mutz and Reeves, 2005:2–4). An example of this would be Gould (1972:21), who highlights the human experience that is portrayed in television, which the citizenry would be unable to experience with other forms of media. Chaffee and Kanihan (1997:421–422) found that citizens who relied

heavily on television for news consumption were less likely to be able to answer factual questions relating to the political realm in comparison to citizens who relied on newspapers for their political news. Furthermore, Druckman (2003) and Keeter (1987) both argue that television plays a significant role in allowing the citizenry to judge the personal characteristics of a political elite, which then influences their opinion of such person.

Various authors have stressed the role that journalists and reporters of mass media broadcasts have played in negatively shaping political trust. Hallin (1992) argues that the increase in journalistic interpretation has negatively swayed the confidence that the citizenry has held in the political elites around election periods from 1968 until 1988 in the USA. Patterson (1993) argues that the negative portrayal and reporting of political actors by journalists through all types of media negatively affect the confidence that citizens have in these political actors as well as in the democratic system. Similar sentiments relating to the negative effect of the professionals who produce media broadcasts and publications on political trust are emphasised by various authors (e.g. Capella and Jamieson, 1997; Newton, 1999:578–579; Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–3).

Some evidence with regard to the changed media landscape with increased focus on journalistic interpretation includes the following emphasised by the media malaise school of thought: It was found by Hallin (1992:5–8) that through the period of 1968–1988, with each presidential election in the USA, the average soundbite become shorter and shorter, declining from 43 to just 9 seconds. Hallin (1992) argues that this change shows a general change with regard to a different strand of television news, where the journalist is placed at the centre of information transferal; moreover, the author argues that this change is in response to the declining confidence held by citizens towards the state. Patterson (1993) also found that there was a decrease in the number of quotes by candidates in written news articles.

Mutz and Reeves (2005:2–3) criticise the media malaise school of thought, arguing that the school of thought, developed by Robinson (1975; 1976), was then applied to all types of media without sufficient evidence. These authors argue that there is not enough causal evidence to sufficiently link television news to an attitude of decreasing political trust among the citizenry. Mutz and Reeves (2005:3) state that "schools of thought about video malaise have broadened into more general claims about political journalism, claims that transcend television, newspapers, and virtually all political media". The authors emphasise that there is not enough evidence to produce a causal statement about the media malaise hypothesis and the school of

thought was broadened to encompass various other forms of mass media without sufficient reason. Furthermore, the authors argue that the video malaise school of thought moved away from researching the link between political trust and television news to the influence that the journalist producing the publications or broadcasts had on the confidence or political trust within a state (Mutz and Reeves, 2005:3).

Much of the research on the link between mass media usage for news and political trust supports the media malaise school of thought. Authors have highlighted various themes, namely the media's conflict as well as its negativity and strategy. Furthermore, there is an increased focus on the role of television news broadcasts in negatively shaping the political trust of the citizenry (Mutz and Reeves, 2005:2–4; Avery, 2009:411–413; Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–3; Ceron, 2015:487–489; Ceron and Memoli, 2015:351; Brosius *et al*., 2019:450–455).

The virtuous circle school of thought was proposed in response to the focus that was placed on the media malaise hypothesis (Mutz and Reeves, 2005:2–4; Avery, 2009:411–412; Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–3; Ceron, 2015:487–489). The virtuous circle school of thought was proposed by Norris (2000:309–215) and argues that increased media engagement can have the opposite effect to what was previously emphasised by literature by instead increasing the political trust of the citizenry. This school of thought states that citizens who are already politically aware, engaged, interested and trusting are more likely to engage with and consume the various forms of media available. As implied in its name, the virtuous circle school of thought emphasises a cyclic approach to the relationship between political trust and media consumption and engagement. Therefore, the attitudes of increased interest already held by the citizens cause them to engage with the media, and this increased engagement promotes greater knowledge and political learning, which in turn will increase political trust within a state, and this political trust will then have a positive influence with regard to the enhancement of democratic norms (Norris, 2000:309–217).

Furthermore, the citizenry who have low levels of political interest will most likely not be swayed greatly by political news, according to Norris (2000:314–317), and if the politically disinterested are exposed to political news through the various forms of mass media, it is likely that they will not engage with the media in a meaningful way and therefore will not pay attention to the media to which they are exposed. This is not likely to have an impact on their attitude and levels of political trust (Norris, 2000:309–315). Avery (2009:428) also argues that political trust is likely to only increase among citizens who are already trusting of the state and

who use newspapers to engage with the media. Pinkleton and Austin (2001:30) similarly found in their study that newspapers increased political knowledge as well as trust among users.

Various studies provide evidence to support the virtuous circle school of thought, both in Europe and in the USA. Norris (2000:309–320), for example, found that there was an increase in political trust that was associated with the increase in political news engagement and consumption during the 1997 election in Britain. Norris (2000:309–320) also found that there was a higher degree of political knowledge, interest as well as social trust among the citizenry who were polled through public opinion data to have a higher degree of political trust; the author found this supporting evidence in the USA as well as in European states. The findings by Aarts *et al*. (2011:17) also support the virtuous circle school of though. Strömbäck *et al*. (2016:105–106) also find a weak, albeit positive association between political trust and media usage.

Avery (2009:424–426) found that, in the USA, citizens who read more newspapers, in particular, were more likely to have a positive attitude of political trust. This finding is consistent with the virtuous circle school of thought, as this form of mass media is specifically emphasised by Norris (2000:58–63) to increase the political trust attitude of citizens. However, this argument regarding the specific effect of newspapers has not been found in all studies. Cappella and Jamieson (1997:189–194) found in their study that the usage of newspapers did not increase political trust among the citizens surveyed.

Literature on the sway of media usage on political trust is split into two streams of thought (Elenbaas and De Vreese, 2008:551–552; Avery, 2009:424; Aarts *et al*., 2011:1–2; Ceron, 2015:487–489). As shown above, literature is largely mixed about the influence of media consumption and engagement on political trust within a state. This has caused other authors to argue that the effect of the media on the attitude of political trust is not entirely dependent on the binaries of the media malaise or the virtuous circle schools of thought. It is emphasised that there is a large spectrum of factors that can shape the political trust attitude of the citizenry. The causal effect of the impact of media usage on political trust is therefore likely to be influenced by a variety of factors and is not entirely determined by the causes of the school of thought (De Vreese, 2005:293; Avery, 2009; Aarts *et al*., 2011).

Furthermore, the stringent separation of the way in which the media is argued to shape political trust is additionally challenged by the results of some studies, such as those by Moy *et al*. (1999:144–146) and Scheufele and Moy (1999:751), who found no relationship between the

consumption of media usage and political trust, but rather emphasised other factors as being responsible in manipulating political trust, such as education and the political ideology of citizens.

Avery (2009:424–426) argues that despite the focus of literature on either the virtuous circle school of thought or the media malaise school of thought, specifically the video malaise school of thought, these schools of thought must not be viewed as an 'either-or' mindset and cannot necessarily be considered as 'competing' with each other. Rather, the conditions under which media exposure or consumption occurs must be considered and it must be recognised that these conditions can vary greatly from state to state or from one situation to another (McCombs and Shaw, 1972:176; De Vreese, 2005:293; Avery, 2009:424–426).

It is argued by Avery (2009:426–427) that the positive influence on the attitude of political trust through media consumption that is emphasised by the virtuous circle school of thought is largely due to the national context of a state as well as the characteristics of the news coverage. The author argues that the relationship between the media and political trust is dependent on the source and the characteristics of the news gathered. Furthermore, differences among the citizenry must also be emphasised, as citizens in a state do not all consume the same level and the same sources of political news; this varies from person to person and therefore could also shape what the citizen is being exposed to through the mass media (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997:168).

The characteristics of citizens that could also sway the relationship between political trust and media consumption are also emphasised. These include individuals' political interest, awareness and partisan values (McCombs and Shaw, 1972:176–177; De Vreese, 2005:293; Strömbäck and Shehata, 2010:89–90 Aarts *et al*., 2011:6). In particular, political interest and political awareness were found to have a causal and reciprocal relationship with political trust and media consumption (Strömbäck and Shehata, 2010:593–594). Pre-existing levels of political trust and the way in which this affects the relationship between political trust and media consumption are also highlighted in literature (Aarts *et al*., 2011:6). Avery (2009:426) states that citizens with higher levels of political trust are more likely to engage with the media in comparison to those with lower levels of political trust.

The quality of what is reported in the news is crucial to how political trust will be shaped through media usage (De Vreese, 2005:293; Ceron, 2015:495). Aarts *et al*. (2011:17) argue that the extent to which the media malaise school of thought will be supported compared to the

virtuous circle school of thought is dependent on the type of audience, the type of media as well as the media system in the state.

Furthermore, Strömbäck *et al*. (2016:89–90) critique the assumption in literature that the relationship between media usage and political trust will remain stable over time. The authors emphasise that theirs was the first longitudinal study in researching this relationship. They emphasise that this variable of time could pay a role in explaining the fluctuating findings in literature relating to the relationship between media consumption and political trust. Their findings show a weak positive effect between media consumption and political trust (Strömbäck *et al*., 2016:89–90).

The rise of the internet has added another dimension to the influence of news on political trust. Since the rise of the internet in the mid-1990s, it has largely been viewed as an open space that could foster democratisation and a supportive political culture (Bailard, 2012:185; Curran, Coen, Aalberg, Hayashi, Jones, Splendore, Papathanassopoulos, Rowe and Tiffen, 2013:891–892; Stoycheff and Nisbett, 2014:642; Ceron, 2015:495), although this view has been challenged. It is also emphasised that the structure of the internet with regard to the consumption of online news sources cannot be considered to be that different from that of traditional news platforms (Ceron, 2015:494; Lu, Qi and Yu, 2019:7). The elite-driven and 'top-down' approach of online news websites mimics the traditional media in slanting news to support the democratic political system in advanced Western democracies (Ceron, 2015:495).

Furthermore, the impact of gathering news from the internet has been argued to have a divergent effect on political trust (Lu *et al*., 2019:1-3). Various studies have found that political trust is negatively shaped by the frequency of media usage, just as was largely argued for the traditional media platforms. Despite this it has also been found that the internet played a positive role on forming political trust (Im, Cho, Porumbescu and Park, 2014:757-758; Ceron, 2015:495-496; Lu *et al.*, 2019:5-7; Cheng, 2020:2008-2009). The political context of a state was seen as playing a role in determining how political trust is influenced by the media usage regarding internet usage. The states where there is a large amount of government control of the traditional media, such as China, the internet political distrust amongst the citizenry (Zhou, Deng and Wu, 2014:13-14; Ceron, 2015:495-496; Lu *et al.*, 2019:5-7; You and Wang, 2020:68-69).

2.4.3 The media and its effect on political trust in developing countries

In general, literature is overly focused on advanced Western democracies. The majority of the schools of thought relating to the role of the media in a democracy have emerged from Western countries, as has much of the research relating to the influence of media usage on political trust (Berger, 1998:602–603; Lin and Lim, 2002:35; Jebril *et al*., 2013:2; Camaj, 2014:188). This section discusses the research that has been conducted on the effect of the media on political trust in less developed democracies and also non democracies.

The most significant amount of research on the above relationship has been conducted in the People's Republic of China (Chen and Shi, 2001; Shi, 2001; Wang, 2005; Yang and Tang, 2010; Shen and Guo, 2013; Wu, 2014). In the media malaise school of thought that is predominantly emphasised in Western literature, studies relating to the sway of media usage on political trust emphasise another dynamic, namely that many countries that are not democratic or have elements of a non-democratic tendencies utilise the media to grow public confidence and trust within the state, such as China, which can be considered to be an authoritarian state (Berger, 1998:602–603; Chen and Shi, 2001:86; Yang and Tang, 2010:422–424; Wu, 2014:96-97).

Chen and Shi (2001:106–107), who examined the political trust levels of citizens in China and how this was shaped by being exposed to the media sharing information about the performance of the state, found that increased media consumption after the Tiananmen Square incident caused a decline in political trust among Chinese citizens (Chen and Shi, 2001:106–107). These results were also found by Shi (2001:412) and Wu (2014:97–98), who found a non-significant relationship between media consumption through television, newspapers and the internet and political trust in the institutions of the legal courts and the police, as well as a decrease in political trust in the Chinese state in general.

In contrast to this negative relationship, others found that increased exposure to political news in China was directly related to an increase in political trust as well as an increase in national pride (Yang and Tang, 2010:422–427; Shen and Guo, 2013:146–147). Furthermore, Shen and Guo (2013:146–147) found that print media was less successful in influencing the political trust attitudes of citizens in comparison to broadcast media. However, they emphasise that once the variable of national pride was controlled for, the relationship between political trust and media consumption was found to be less significant (Shen and Guo, 2013:146–147).

Furthermore, in China's post-communist period, the ability of the Chinese state to control what is being reported and broadcasted in the media has declined, although it has not been depleted

completely, and propaganda in the Chinese state still exists and is consumed by citizens through some portions of the media. In addition, the rise of the internet has lessened political control over the media, where despite attempts by the state to control the content allowed on the internet, the internet has largely found a way to circumvent state controls (Chen and Shi, 2001:86; Wang, 2005:160; Yang and Tang, 2010:429; Shen and Guo, 2013:146–147).

Researching the link between political trust and the media in China is therefore made more complicated due to the state's influence over the media. Shen and Guo (2013:146–147) argue that this relationship has been manufactured through testing and once the variable of national pride is controlled for, the relationship between political trust and news media is not significant. This finding is suggested to be a result of propaganda in China being successful in building a united national identity among citizens (Shen and Guo, 2013:148). Chen and Shi (2001:107), Wang (2005:160) and Wu (2014:96–97) all found that the state's propaganda caused a decrease in political trust due to citizens distrusting the media based on their evaluations of the media as being largely propaganda.

The relationship between political trust and media consumption was also found to be a negative in Taiwan (Shi, 2001:412; Wu, 2014:97). Wu (2014:97–98) found that media usage through the media platforms of television, newspapers and the internet did not have a significant impact on Taiwanese citizens' trust in the police and the legal system. Shi (2001:412), however, found evidence that consumption of media negatively shaped political trust in Taiwan.

Lin and Lim (2002:36–37) researched the relationship between political cynicism and media usage through the radio and newspapers in South Korea among young people. The authors found similar results to Shi (2001) and Wu (2014) - media consumption negatively shaped political trust. Moreover, the authors also found that higher levels of distrust towards media institutions resulted in higher their political cynicism (Lin and Lim, 2002:36–37).

The relationship between media consumption and political trust in Africa is under researched, and the studies that have explored this relationship have done so on a continental level, not within specific states. Furthermore, these studies were often part of broader research relating to exploring the factors that influence political trust in Africa. Hutchison and Johnson (2011:446; 478–749) found that, in African states, increased usage of media tended to decrease political trust.

Although the relationship between political trust and media consumption was not tested empirically, Berzina (2018: 5–7) explored the trends in each variable separately regarding the

Russian media in Latvia. The author found that both political trust and media consumption in Latvia are increasing. The positive trends for each of these two variables has led the author to suggest that they have an effect on each other and that further research is needed to test the relationship empirically (Berzina, 2018:5–7).

In Kosovo, however, Camaj (2014:201–202), largely finds a mixed relationship, where both the virtuous circle and the media malaise schools of thought were supported, depending on the citizen as well as the type of media. Moreover, the author emphasises the role of the radio and newspapers in creating a positive relationship between political trust and media consumption, while the internet resulted in a negative relationship between these variables (Camaj, 2014:201–202). Camaj (2014:201–202) also emphasises the agenda-setting function of the mass media in transitional democratic societies.

2.5 SOUTH AFRICAN MEDIA INSTITUTIONS AND THEIR RELATION TO DEMOCRACY

The influence of mass media consumption on political trust in South Africa is another under researched area. While there is some research relating to the effect of the mass media on democratic attitudes in South Africa political trust specifically is not explored. In addition, the majority of the research relating to the linkage between media usage and democracy in South Africa cannot be generalised to the entire South African citizenry due to limitations in the researchers' methodology and sample sizes, such as those of Pepler (2003), Ndlovu (2008; 2010), Friedman (2010), Malila (2013), Duncan, Meijer, Drok, Garman, Strelitz, Steenveld, Bosch, Ndlovu and Media Tenor (2013), Wasserman and Garman (2014), Malila and Oelofsen (2016) and Malila (2016).

After the end of apartheid, the South African media had to reposition itself in a newly democratic society, where large portions of the media had previously played the role of continually supporting the apartheid state. Portions of the media that were critical of the apartheid state were forced to operate from underground headquarters. The post-apartheid era witnessed an expanding mass media institution as well as an emphasis on independence from the state (Wasserman, 2010:570–571, 595; Paterson and Malila, 2013:2–4; Wasserman and Garman, 2014:393–395). Freedom of expression with regard to the media is enshrined in the South African Constitution and the Bill of Rights, as well as the role of the media as a source of knowledge for citizens (Wasserman, 2010:595–596; Sparks, 2011:12–14; Wasserman and Garman, 2014:393). Moreover, to further ensure that the role of the newly transformed media

sector in South Africa would be focused on supporting democratic norms, the Press Council was founded (Wasserman and Garman, 2014:394).

The ownership of mass media institutions in South Africa was largely transferred from white owners during apartheid to black owners after apartheid, as well as to foreign investors. There was also an expansion of community-based radio stations (Berger, 2001:151–154; Wasserman, 2010:571–572). The increased expansion and independence of the South Africa media resulted in the media emerging as another player in the political realm in South Africa (Voltmer, 2006:6; Wasserman, 2010:573).

The South African media can arguably be regarded as playing the role emphasised by Western scholars, namely an essential, democratically supportive watchdog of the state. Moreover, many of the media editors after apartheid have placed a large amount of energy into ensuring that South African media institutions are separated from the state. This monitoring role of the South African media has caused the publications and broadcasts produced by the media to be largely focused on the political realm, state processes and the various political actors in the political realm (Wasserman, 2010:595–571; Malila, 2013:82; Wasserman and Garman, 2014:404–405). Moreover, a content analysis of South African media institutions shows that the more crises the South African political realm experienced, the more problem-focused and watchdog-centred the role of the South African media became (Malila, 2013:82).

The South African media emphasises and positions itself within the largely Western-developed theoretical role of the media as an independent and free supporter and promoter of democratic values (Ndlovu, 2008:64–66; Sparks, 2011:12–14; Wasserman and Garman, 2014:393). This self-proclaimed narrative by South African media institutions has been called into question by various scholars (Sparks, 2011:12–14; Wasserman and Garman, 2014:393). Some South African media institutions, for example, have been implicated in scandals relating to state intervention and accused of focusing more on commercialism and tabloid-focused information (Wasserman, 2010:571). An example of the state intervention mentioned above is the state's threat to remove state advertising from the media if a certain request was not met (Wasserman, 2010:573). Moreover, the media institutions in South Africa are a largely self-regulatory body; it was therefore proposed by the ANC that a media tribunal be established to serve as a regulatory body. This proposal was met with fierce criticism from journalists, who stated that it would be a form of state intervention and control that would violate the freedom of expression right enshrined in the Constitution (Wasserman, 2010:575).

Much of the literature in the South African context relating to the influence of the media and the political realm specifically relates to the youth (Booysen, 1991; Claassen, 2001; Du Plooy-Cilliers and Bezuidenhout 2003; Pepler, 2003; Ndlovu, 2008; Ndlovu, 2010; Friedman, 2010; Sparks, 2011; Mattes, 2012; Duncan *et al*., 2013; Malila, 2013; Wasserman and Garman, 2014; Malila, 2016; Malila and Oelofsen, 2016). The attitudes of other sub-groups in the population remain under researched. Moreover, even with regard to the focus on youths, the sample population that has been utilised was critiqued by Ndlovu (2014:95) as not being representative enough of the various races and classes in South Africa, as the sample was often made up mostly of university students. This proportional imbalance therefore does not reflect the broader South African context (Ndlovu, 2014:95).

Malila (2013:36–37) and Ndlovu (2014:94–95) recognise the media as playing an integral role in creating a more politically informed and knowledgeable citizenry but emphasise the changing media habits of young people. The authors highlight that the mass media in South Africa has largely characterised the youth as being disengaged from politics (Malila, 2013:36–37; Ndlovu, 2014:94–95). Moreover, young people do not recognise the function of the media in informing civic action (Malila, 2013:84–85). The youth in South Africa are identified as utilising both traditional news media, such as radio, television and newspapers, and the internet and social media to access political news (Malila, 2013:83–84). Malila (2013:80–81) and Ndlovu (2008:70–71; 2014:95) also emphasise that the youth are consuming less and less media. This concern relating to the changing media habits of the youth is also emphasised by Pepler (2003:2–3), who highlights a lack of interest by the youth in the political realm. It was found in a nationally representative longitudinal study from 2006 to 2012 that the youth of South Africa are utilising less television, in particular, to access political news (Ndlovu, 2014:103).

This view on the low media usage habits of the youth is not accepted by all authors, for example Strelitz (2002:324–325), who emphasises a high consumption rate of newspapers among white Afrikaans students. Ndlovu (2014:94–95) highlights that despite the interest in literature relating to the youth's media habits and the effect that this could have on democratic values, there is no definitive conclusion about the changing media habits of the youth, as various studies have noted different results.

2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter explored literature on political trust and the possible effect of media usage on trust. Firstly, the concept of political trust is examined, along with its theoretical underpinnings. Norris' conceptual framework of political trust, the causes and the consequences of political trust, as well as the interrelationship of political trust, legitimacy and a democratic culture are also discussed. Secondly, the political trust environment in South Africa is detailed. Thirdly, the relationship between media institutions and political trust is examined; this section first emphasised the theorised role of the media in a democratic state and then analysed the research that has been conducted relating to media consumption and political trust. Moreover, it was deemed necessary to explore the relationship between these variables in states that are not advanced Western democracies. Finally, this chapter examines South African media institutions and their relations to democracy.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The research question (see Chapter 1) of this study asks whether the frequency of media usage to gather political news by South African citizens has an effect on popular levels of political trust. Specifically, where media usage shapes trust that citizens extend towards key objects in the political system such as: political actors, political institutions, regime performance and regime principles. To address this research question, nationally representative survey data is utilised from the Afrobarometer (rounds 6 and 7) survey series. Statistical tests are conducted to determine the relationship between the independent variable (frequency of media usage) and the dependent variable (political trust in the three above specific political objects) in the South African context.

This chapter sets out the methodology that is employed to investigate the relationship between these variables. It starts with an overview of the research design and a discussion of the quantitative methodology and questionnaire surveys in general, the secondary data analysis and the Afrobarometer data sets that were used for this study. Following this, the next section explores how the dependent and independent variables have been operationalised and measured in other established research. Subsequently, the operationalisation of this study's variables is compared and was found to be in line with global applications. The various statistical tests conducted in this study are then discussed. Finally, important ethical considerations as well as the limitations of this study are outlined.

3.2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN: CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY WITH A LONGITUDINAL ASPECT

This is primarily a cross-sectional study, because it explores the relationship between political trust and media usage using two cross-sectional surveys conducted at two different points in time, namely 2015 and 2018. However, the data results from the two surveys were compared.

While it should be emphasised that this study does not claim to be a longitudinal study (robust longitudinal studies require at least several time points), the inclusion of two points in time does introduce a longitudinal aspect to the study. The inclusion of only two time points allows for the data from both years to be examined sufficiently and within the technical requirements of this study.

The aim of a longitudinal study is to measure changes over time, in comparison to a cross-sectional methodology, where the aim is to measure a phenomenon at a single point in time (Burnham, Gilland Lutz, Grant and Layton-Henry, 2008:61; Pierce, 2011:10; Barakso, Sabet and Schaffner, 2014:88). A single survey measures the various attitudes, behaviours and opinions at that point in time. In contrast, it is only possible to measure and generalise changes in attitudes, behaviours and opinions over time when continuously measuring and analysing the results of the same questions over time in a longitudinal study (Burnham *et al*., 2008:61; Pierce, 2011:10).

Two key disadvantages of cross-sectional design exist. Firstly, the inability to draw confident causal conclusions due to the lack of time-based aspects in the research design, where a precedence of how the variables manipulate each over a period of time can be examined. Secondly, that common method variance might arise between various different researchers (Spector, 2019:125). Despite the disadvantages, a cross-sectional research design has been well utilised in research and has played an essential role in establishing the associations between various variables even without discovering causal conclusions. The associations discovered in a cross-sectional research design help to understand and theorise about various phenomena (Spector, 2019:136).

The inclusion of two data sets provides a longitudinal aspect to the extent that the researcher was able to compare very similar variables across two consecutive points in time that follow each other to observe similarities and differences. The longitudinal aspect in this study helps to overcome the disadvantages of a cross-sectional research design (Spector, 2019:125).

3.3 A QUANTITATIVE APPROACH: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES

This study utilises a quantitative research approach to examine the effect of media usage on political trust levels among South African citizens towards key political objects in the political system: political actors, political institutions, regime satisfaction and regime performance in both 2015 and 2018. The quantitative data is drawn from the Afrobarometer questionnaires.

A quantitative approach was deemed highly appropriate to examine this topic (which consists of examining mass attitudes and behaviour) and was in line with the research methodology previously applied by other researchers, as outlined in Section 3.6 below. A quantitative approach is largely focused on testing the relationship between variables. Surveys using structured questionnaires are an important tool for social science research (Hox and Boeije,

2005:593). The benefits and limitations of the quantitative approach in general and survey questionnaires more specifically are now discussed.

One key advantage of survey research is that the sampling methods can be used in a manner to ensure that the entire population is represented through the data (Hox and Boeije, 2005:593; Clawson and Oxley, 2012:30). A quantitative methodology allows the results to be generalisable to a broader population. This is due to the large representative sample sizes that are often employed (De Vaus, 2001:7–8; Burnham *et al.*, 2008:40; Pierce, 2011:3–4; Barakso *et al*., 2014:88;). A quantitative methodology would therefore allow causal inferences to be made that are applicable to the broader South African population.

Quantitative survey questionnaire data are defined by the ability to assign a numerical value to the answer categories represented through the survey questions; quantitative survey questionnaire data can therefore be statistically coded (Hox and Boeije, 2005:594). This adds to the reliable and objective nature of quantitative survey questionnaires, as the numerical coding allows other researchers to check the trustworthiness of the results (Pennings, Kemen and Kleinnijenhuis, 2006:12; Burnham *et al*., 2008:51; Pierce, 2011:3; Barakso *et al*., 2014:88).

Survey research is the most common data collection method of public opinion data and the use of survey research has had a great impact on social science research (Brady, 2000:47; Clawson and Oxley, 2012:27). Survey research has long been used in the political science discipline to measure the attitudes, opinions and behaviours of citizens in states (Weisberg, Krosnick and Bowen, 1996:20–21; De Vaus, 2001:7–8; Burnham *et al*., 2008:166; Pierce, 2011:3; Clawson and Oxley, 2012:29). This systematic, rational and logical nature of a quantitative survey methodology offers the best method of examining and analysing respondents with regard to various political phenomena, such as partisanship or voting behaviour (De Vaus, 2001:7–8; Pierce, 2011:4–5). Therefore, survey research has been used to measure a range of different political concepts, and therefore allows political science researchers to test, confirm or deny a variety of political schools of thought (Brady, 2000:48–49). Since the emergence of large-scale political science quantitative survey research in the USA in the 1950s, survey research has been well documented as a vehicle to test the political science schools of thought in existence (Brady, 2000:49–51). In addition, survey research has forced political scientists to clarify their concepts and modify them into questions prior to conducting research, to allow for accurate coding of the questions (Brady, 2000:51-52).

Surveys are utilised to portray descriptive data, but can also be useful in making inferences and in pertaining to the causes and the influence of variables on one another. Surveys are therefore used with inferential statistics to determine the causal effect of a variety of variables (Brady, 2000:47). Norris (2011:8) describes the importance of surveys capturing the attitudes and opinions of citizens as "the canary in the coal mine where signs point toward pervasive doubts about the role and powers of government, sentiments which, it feared, can slide into deep rooted popular aversion and hostility toward all things political". Hence, the importance of political research through surveys is emphasised.

Furthermore, each respondent that is involved in a quantitative survey questionnaire is asked the same questions in the same manner. There is a greater challenge in garnering objective results due to the way in which the data are gathered in a qualitative methodology with regard to interviews or field notes, for example. This adds to the reliable nature of a quantitative methodology (Burnham *et al*., 2008:51; Pierce, 2011:5).

Another advantage of surveys is that they aid data collection, although they can be time-consuming and expensive for the researcher. The collection of public opinion data in the quantitative tradition is largely done through closed-ended questions, because quantifiable data need to be collected. The respondent is able to answer many questions faster and is not overburdened (Brady, 2000:47; Clawson and Oxley, 2012:30).

There are a variety of ways in which survey responses can be collected. Face-to-face interviews are regarded as the best method of data collection, despite being costly and time-consuming.

However, there are also weaknesses to using a quantitative research method. It has been argued that a quantitative method does not capture all the complexities of the political realm. In contrast, a qualitative study provides a deeper analysis of a smaller number of case studies that would be collected, whereas quantitative data can be viewed as too detached and remote. However, a qualitative approach would not provide results that are generalisable to the broader population, as the sample sizes used in qualitative research are often small (Burnham *et al*., 2008:40, 166; Pierce, 2011:4–5).

Another drawback involves respondents themselves. Respondents to a survey could influence the validity of the survey instrument by interpreting the survey questions slightly differently (Brady, 2000:48–49; Vogt, 2007:87; Pierce, 2011:5). For example, when looking at the answers on the Likert scale, "strongly object" and "object" could be interpreted to be different levels of 'objecting' by different respondents. Furthermore, respondents could hold a bias in

their answers and exaggerate or lie in response to various survey questions; this is especially true with sensitive topics (Weisberg *et al.*, 1996:20–21; Tourangeau, Rips and Rasinski, 2000:269–271; Vogt, 2007:87; Pierce, 2011:5).

Finally, some question the validity of various concepts used in political science quantitative research. As not all concepts are agreed upon, some question whether the survey questions are representative of the underlying concept are being measuring (Tourangeau *et al*., 2000:318–320; Pierce, 2011:5). The validity question also relates to who has collected the statistics that will be analysed. Many quantitative surveys have large sample sizes that require multiple people to collect the data, and therefore the researcher or organisation does not always have complete control over the data collection process (Vogt, 2007:87; Burnham *et al*., 2008:166; Pierce, 2011:5).

Quantitative survey research in the political science field in South Africa is not used as widely as various qualitative approaches, although there is a consistent tradition of researchers utilising this research method and design. This research tradition has contributed positively to the understanding of politics, democracy and society (Mattes, 2013:479–480). However, it is important to emphasise that the survey research tradition in developing countries faces a variety of challenges; some of these include high costs, the lack of infrastructure development in various areas and low or uneven telephone ownership levels (Donsbach and Traugott, 2008:115–117).

3.4 SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

This study analysed secondary data produced by the Afrobarometer survey series. Secondary data differs from primary data, as secondary data are not compiled by the researcher, but instead collected from a secondary source. Primary data, therefore, refer to data that researchers acquired themselves for a study (Rabianski, 2003:43–46).

There are five different reasons for the use of secondary data, namely teaching and learning, methodological advancement, comparative research or replication of the original analysis, a description of contemporary or historical trajectories, and reanalysis of the data where new research questions that were not previously addressed will be attested to (Hox and Boeije, 2005:593). Moreover, organisations often play the role of collecting a large amount of data and distributing it to the larger research community (Hox and Boeije, 2005:593–594).

Disadvantages of secondary data include the inability to design and operationalise one's own variables and theoretical constructs, and the data collection process and the research design are not tailored first-hand. However, this concern did not apply to this study, because the surveys in question were designed specifically to explore the study's research questions.

This study benefits from the use of secondary data in the following ways: the financial costs were hugely diminished in comparison to undertaking an entire data collection process from start to finish; the necessary variables for the research topic were available and operationalised in line with globally accepted methods; and the use of the Afrobarometer survey data provided the researcher with a sufficiently large sample to be able to answer the research question while extrapolating to the wider South African population.

3.5 THE AFROBAROMETER DATA SETS

The survey data sets used in the study were sourced from the South African Afrobarometer survey series from the most recent rounds held in 2015 (Round 6) and 2018 (Round 7). The Afrobarometer is a research institution that identifies as non-partisan as well as pan-Africanist and that is responsible for fielding public attitude surveys in over 30 African states on the topics of governance, democracy, society, and the economy. In 2019, Afrobarometer celebrated its 20th year of existence, with the first round of surveys being completed in 2001 (Afrobarometer, 2020). Furthermore, after a short embargo period, the data are available to the public on its website to download freely from www.afrobarometer.org.

Afrobarometer forms part of the internationally renowned barometer series focusing on different areas of the world. For example, there is the Arabbarometer, the Asianbarometer, the Eurobarometer and the Latinbarometer. Despite forming part of the international series, the survey is implemented independently in each state through the work of a national research team. Moreover, Afrobarometer has internationally acclaimed core associates, including Michigan State University, the Institute for Democracy in South Africa and the Centre for Democratic Development in Ghana (Chingwete, 2016:1–2; Afrobarometer, 2020).

The sample sizes used in an Afrobarometer survey are nationally representative of the country's voting-age citizen population. Each sample is specifically designed to be representative of the broader population and of all population groups. The sample size usually consists of somewhere between 2,100 and 2,400 randomly selected respondents. In South Africa, the sample size consists of 2,400 respondents for both the round 6 and 7 surveys. A sample of this size holds a margin of error of approximately 2% and there is a 95% confidence level in the

results (Chingwete, 2016:1–2; Afrobarometer, 2020). The interviewers in the Afrobarometer surveys receive training in quantitative data collection and are dispatched in groups of four. Each group of four is overseen by one supervisor to ensure the validity of the surveys (Chingwete, 2016:1–2; Afrobarometer, 2020).

Afrobarometer is therefore considered a reliable source of secondary data for various reasons. In addition, the organisation conducts fieldwork with trained interviewers and the reliability of the data is further safeguarded by the guarantee of supervision of the interviewers. The use of secondary quantitative data from Afrobarometer safeguards against some of the above-mentioned disadvantages of secondary quantitative data.

3.6 THE OPERATIONALISATION AND MEASUREMENT OF VARIABLES: A GLOBAL REVIEW

This section explores the ways in which international scholarly research has operationalised and measured the two key variables in this study, namely political trust and the frequency of media usage.

3.6.1 Political trust

Quantitative surveys are widely used to measure political trust globally, such as those by Loewenberg (1971), Citrin *et al.* (1975), Muller and Jukam (1977), Inglehart (1988), Mischler and Rose (1997), Dalton (1998), Hetherington (1998), Scholz and Lubell (1998), Newton and Norris (2000), Mischler and Rose (2001), Catterberg and Moreno (2005), Rose (2007), Criado and Herreros (2007) and Marien and Hooghe (2011). Although political trust is not an extensively researched concept in South Africa, quantitative surveys have also been relied on as a research method in scholarly works by Askvik (2008; 2010), Chingwete (2016), Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg (2016), and Schulz-Herzenberg and Gouws (2017).

Despite surveys being a common research method, the operationalisation and measurement of political trust are still debated (Dalton, 1998:1–3; Norris, 1999:9–11; Levi and Stoker, 2000:496; Catterberg and Moreno, 2005:33–34; Seyd, 2015:3–5; Schneider, 2017:964). However, there is agreement in the literature that trust must be measured through various objects or levels of trust (Norris, 1999:10–17; Levi and Stoker, 2000:497). Nevertheless, there is some disagreement with regard to how best to differentiate between these different objects or levels of trust (Dalton, 1998:1–3; Levi and Stoker, 2000:497). The variety of approaches to the levels of trust has caused inconsistencies and contradictions in literature on political trust.

However, despite the differentiation of trust objects to operationalise this concept, the standard approach is to operationalise political trust using the concept of political support. This is specifically done through Easton's (1975) and later Norris' (1999) differentiation of diffuse and specific support. Norris' (1999) framework has been used by various authors to operationalise political trust, including by Crête, Pelletier and Couture (2006:3), Zmerli and Castillo (2015:181) and Norris (2019:6–7). In the South African context, Norris' (1999) work was also adopted by Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg (2016:14–15) to operationalise political trust.

Key scholars Easton (1975) and later Norris (1999) both built their frameworks through emphasis on the importance of identifying objects of support when measuring political trust. Easton (1975:435–436) identifies three different objects: political authorities, the regime and the political community. Norris (1999:9) built on this foundation to create a conceptual framework with greater distinctions between the objects of support. The levels of this framework were expanded to five, namely the political community, regime principles, regime performance, regime institutions and political actors. Norris (1999:9) argues that the public is able to make greater distinctions between the levels of support than allowed for in Easton's (1975) framework. For example, in Easton's (1975) framework, people were not able to choose between different elements of the regime, where Norris (1999:9) states that in practice, people do make distinctions between regime principles and regime performance. The fivefold framework of Norris (1999) is further supported through the statistical analysis of factor analysis that shows that the public does make distinctions along these levels of support.

Norris (1999:10–12) proposes measurement and operationalisation techniques of each level of the framework (see Chapter 2 for a discussion of the levels in greater detail). The political community is understood as an attachment to the nation that exists beyond the present institutions, actors and government (Norris, 1999:10–11). This level is generally measured through survey items assessing "a sense of belonging to the community, national pride, and national identity" (Norris, 1999:11). The respondents' emotional attachment is therefore emphasised.

The second and third levels of regime principles and performance have been argued to be largely intertwined and it can be difficult to gauge differences between these levels (Norris, 1999:11–12). The second level of regime principles is measured though the support for values of the (democratic) political system. Norris (1999:11) identified two ways in which these

values are operationalised in a democratic system: The first and most common method is to determine the level of agreement from the respondents that democracy is the best form of governance (Norris, 1999:11). The second measurement technique is to determine the level of agreement with the values that are generally understood as the basic principles of democracy, such as freedom, tolerance and the rule of law (Norris, 1999:11). The third level of regime performance is operationalised through the support of how the political system functions in practice. This target of trust is commonly measured through determining the respondents' satisfaction with democracy (Norris, 1999:11). This measure is used widely in international literature, although it is sometimes critiqued as being too ambiguous, where it could be seen to be measure both regime principles and performance (Norris, 1999:18). Furthermore, the use of this measure in a newer democratic state is questioned, and another measure that compares the old regime against the new democratic regime is suggested (Norris, 1999:11).

The measurement of regime institutions and political actors has most commonly been determined through trust perception question items on a variety of regime institutions and political actors (Mishler and Rose, 1997:421–422; Norris, 1999:11–12; Marien, 2011:4–5; Seyd, 2015:5–6). Therefore, both levels are operationalised though determining the attitude of support towards the various regime institutions and political actors (Norris, 1999:11–12). However, the division between these fourth and fifth levels is also recognised as somewhat ambiguous in instances where the distinction between the office and the incumbent official who occupies that office is difficult to recognise for respondents in practice (Norris, 1999:12). Levi and Stoker (2000:497–500) make a similar point when they argue that citizens cannot distinguish institutions from incumbents, which could affect the interpretation of the results of such research. An example of this would be interpreting low trust in political actors, but a higher degree of trust in institutions. The differentiation of levels is also questioned, especially whether respondents are able to judge an institution without taking the incumbent into account (Marien, 2011:4).

Another criticism relates to the objects of political trust that have been identified by Norris' framework (1999). It is argued that political trust can only be said to exist towards political actors or institution, and not towards principles, for example, where not every assessment of trust can be considered an object of trust (Levi and Stoker, 2000:497–500).

Norris' (1999:12) framework is based on measures that have been widely used in political trust research and originates from the 1958 National Election Studies (NES) trust-in-government

questions in the USA.[1] These measures have been widely utilised in determining trust in various targets in quantitative survey research (Mishler and Rose, 1997:422; Norris, 1999:12; Levi and Stoker, 2000:497–500). The NES measures are underlined by the conception of trustworthiness of government (Levi and Stoker, 2000:498). However, the original NES question items are critiqued as ignoring other potential indicators of political trust and it is questioned how well these items actually measure political trust (Levi and Stoker, 2000:497–500; Norris, 1999:12; Catterberg and Moreno, 2005:33–34; Seyd, 2015:2–3). Furthermore, the interpretation of decrease in trust found through the NES measures resulted in a longstanding debate on whether the decrease was incumbent-focused or system-focused (Citrin, 1974:974–976; Mishler and Rose, 1997:422; Norris, 1999:12; Levi and Stoker, 2000:498; Marien, 2011:3).

While the conceptual frameworks of Norris (1999) and Easton (1975) and their measures are widely accepted, political trust has also been operationalised through various other means. In practice, this has resulted in measurement problems, as the various concepts are used interchangeably, resulting in the same indicators being utilised to measure different concepts, thereby causing confusion (Dalton, 1998:1–3; Levi and Stoker, 2000:497–499; Marien, 2011:3). Some examples of the diverse range of survey item indicators include support for various policies, evaluations of political actors and trust in the regime and institutions (Hooghe, 2011:272; Marien, 2011:3–4; Seyd, 2015:9–10). The confidence of the public in various institutions and actors has also been used as a measure of political trust (Catterberg and Moreno, 2005:33–34).

Corruption perceptions of political actors are also utilised to empirically measure political trust (Anderson and Tverdova, 2003:101–102). This corruption measure involves respondents being asked specifically whether they evaluate a particular political actor to be corrupt. The argument is that citizens will not trust the political elite if actors are perceived as corrupt (Anderson and Tverdova, 2003:101–102; Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:21). In the South African context, this measure has been used by Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg (2016). The authors found that if a respondent evaluates a political actor as corrupt, it is highly likely that the respondent also distrusts the same political authority.

[1] Paraphrased NES question items: "Do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right; does the government waste a lot of money; is the government run by a few big interests looking out for themselves; are most politicians crooked; do politicians know what they are doing?" (Marien, 2011:3).

3.6.2 Frequency of media usage

A second body of literature explores the sway of media usage on political trust. This research draws on political trust variables that focus mainly on including political institutions and actors (Aarts *et al*., 2011:11–12; Strömbäck *et al*., 2016:95–96).

As noted in the literature review, media usage has been found to have an inconsistent effect on political trust, as captured by the media malaise and virtuous circle schools of thought. The contradictory findings may arise due to the use of different methodologies to explore the relationship between these two variables, namely the experimental methodology and quantitative survey methodology (Avery, 2009:427; Strömbäck *et al*., 2016:105). The experimental methodology was used by Cappella and Jamieson (1997), Mutz and Reeves (2005) and Shehata (2014). In these studies, media usage was found to have a more negative influence on the attitude of political trust compared to the findings from survey research. In contrast, studies that use survey research showed both positive or negative relationships between the variables, and these relationships tended to be weaker compared to those in experimental studies (Newton, 1999; Norris, 2000; Aarts *et al*., 2012).

In survey research, there is a difference between media usage and media exposure. The difference between these two conceptualisations relates to the active attention the citizen pays to the media. Some argue that attention is a more appropriate measure of media usage, as citizens are actively and consciously engaging with the media. On the other hand, it is possible for citizens to be exposed to various media sources, but they are not necessarily actively choosing to engage with the source. Exposure relates to how often respondents consume media reports, while attention refers to how often respondents pay attention to the variety of news types in existence (Chaffee and Schleuder, 1986;76–79; Chan, 1997:287; Strömbäck and Shehata, 2010:579–580; Aarts *et al*., 2012). This distinction has caused some authors to measure the impact of political trust through the lens of exposure and attention separately (Avery, 2009:416–417; Strömbäck and Shehata, 2010; Aarts *et al*., 2012).

3.7 THE OPERATIONALISATION OF THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLE: FREQUENCY OF NEWS MEDIA USAGE TO GATHER POLITICAL NEWS

This section now draws on the global practises outlined above to discuss how this study's variables are operationalised. The independent variable, frequency of usage of media for political news question asks how often the respondents gather news from various media platforms. The media platforms are as follows: radio, television, newspapers and the internet.

The Likert response categories were ‘every day’, ‘a few times a week’, ‘a few times a month’, ‘less than once a month’ and ‘never’. Therefore, the Afrobarometer’s question focuses specifically on asking the respondents how frequently they obtain political news from a variety of platforms. This study therefore looked at frequency of exposure to political news via these media platforms. However, the questions were also designed to tap more than just exposure to media, but also the active seeking of information, as attention is a preferable measure in comparison to exposure, as discussed earlier (Chaffee and Schleuder, 1986:76–79; Strömbäck and Shehata, 2010:579–580; Aarts *et al*., 2012). It is therefore the frequency aspect of the survey question that allows for the differentiation between ‘exposure’ and ‘attention’ to the media, as the media usage of the citizens is intentional. The independent variable, frequency media usage to gather political news, was operationalised in two phases using the Afrobarometer survey questionnaire rounds 6 and 7 (see the Appendix).

3.7.1 Phase 1

The first step taken to operationalise the independent variable dealt with the construction of question indices. SPSS allows for question items to be computed into a single index where a single concept can be measured (Field, 2009:629). The frequency of media usage was computed into two new indices through SPSS using Likert scales of media usage. The first media usage variable (Media Usage Variable 1) computed consisted of all the media platforms, except internet usage. Therefore, this variable consisted of radio, television and newspaper media platforms (see Figure 3.1). The second media usage variable (Media Usage Variable 2) included internet usage, hence all four news platforms (radio, television, newspapers and the internet) (see Figure 3.2). Both Media Usage Variable 1 and Media Usage Variable 2 were statistically tested against the dependent variable.

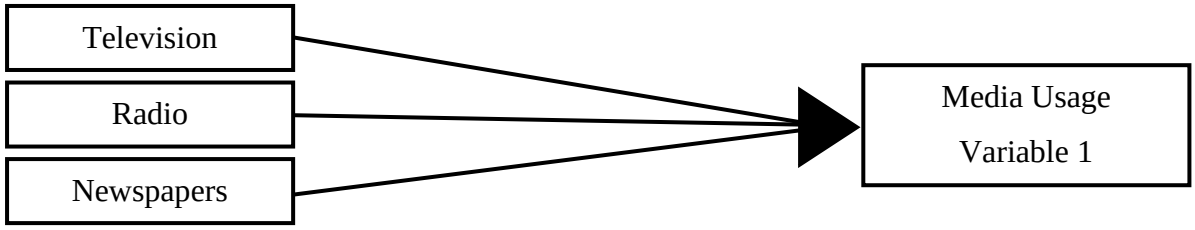

Figure 3.1: Independent variable: Frequency of Media Usage Variable 1

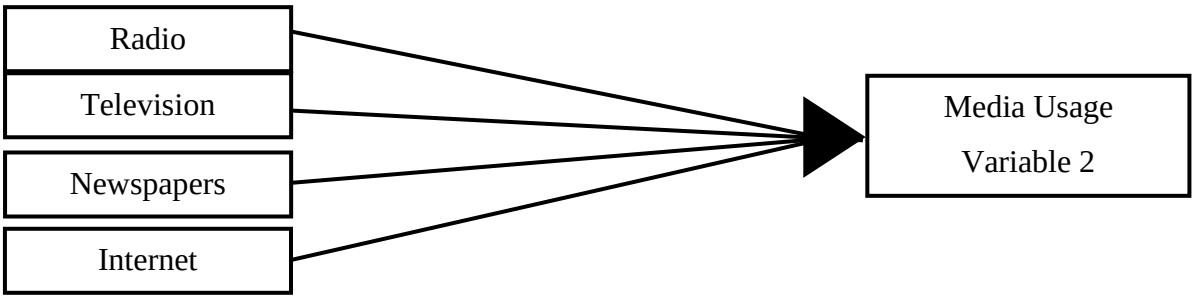

Figure 3.2: Independent variable: Frequency of Media Usage Variable 2

There are reasons for excluding the internet in the first set of tests. Radio, television and newspapers are widely and regularly used by South African citizens, while the internet is less equitability spread among the citizenry (refer to Table 1.1 in Chapter 1). Two media usage variables therefore guard against the possibility of respondents potentially being avid news consumers but not having access to the internet.

To ensure compatibility of the question items, necessary statistical analyses were conducted prior to the construction of the two media usage indices. These analyses included factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test, the statistical significance of the Bartlett's test of sphericity, Kaiser's criterion, and Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis. Factor analysis was conducted to identify clusters of attitudes and to determine the extent to which question items were measuring a concept, as recommend by Field (2009:628–629). The KMO test determines sampling adequacy, as the reliability of factor analysis results is also dependent on satisfactory sampling (Field, 2009:645–647). Kaiser's criterion is the rule that only components with an eigenvalue greater than 1 are retained and constructed into a question index (Field, 2009:640). Cronbach's alpha is the most common measure of reliability of the constructed index following the factor analysis results. Although the value of Cronbach's alpha must be interpreted with caution, the value of 0.7 has been stated as the cut-off value, but it has been proven that the higher the number of question items in the constructed index, the more likely the constructed index will have a Cronbach's alpha value of above 0.7 (Field, 2009:674–675). Moreover, the statistical significance of the Bartlett's test of sphericity was determined.

The construction of the index of Media Usage Variable 1 in rounds 6 and 7 was reviewed. It was revealed that the KMO measure was 0.605 in the Round 6 data set and 0.603 in the Round 7 data set. The results of this measure revealed that satisfactory sampling occurred, as the values were above the recommended value of 0.5 (Field, 2009:647). In addition, the Bartlett's test of sphericity was highly statistically significant with a p-value of 0.000 in rounds 6 and 7.

A total of three components were exposed in both Round 6 and Round 7 data sets; one of these components in each survey round had an eigenvalue greater than 1. In Round 6, the eigenvalue greater than 1 was valued at 1.488, and this component explained 49.603% of variance; in Round 7, the eigenvalue greater than 1 was valued at 1.518 and explained 50.604% of variance. Moreover, the component matrix revealed strong factor loadings during factor analysis in rounds 6 and 7 (see Table 3.1). Following factor analysis, the reliability measure of Cronbach's alpha was tested: In Round 6, the value was 0.485 and in Round 7, the value was 0.509. After performing the above statistical analysis on Media Usage Variable 1 in both Round 6 and Round 7 of the data sets, it was concluded that the question item variables are related and allowed for the formation of a scale.

Table 3.1: Factor analysis: Media Usage Variable 1

Question index	**Factor loadings: Round 6**	**Factor loadings: Round 7**
Radio	0.707	0.756
Television	0.68	0.688
Newspapers	0.726	0.687

Media Usage Variable 2 was then inspected relating to the creation of this index. The KMO measure was valued at 0.626 in Round 6 and in Round 7 it was determined to be 0.621. The results of the KMO measure showed that adequate sampling had occurred, as the values were above the recommended value of 0.5 (Field, 2009:647). In addition, the Bartlett's test of sphericity showed a p-value of 0.000 in both Round 6 and Round 7 data sets. This value was highly statistically significant. Both Round 6 and Round 7 data sets revealed four components in each: In Round 6, one of the components had an eigenvalue greater than 1, valued at 1 758, which accounted for 43.932% of variance; and in Round 7, one component had an eigenvalue greater than 1, valued at 1.651, which explained 41.286% of variance. Furthermore, the component matrix determined strong factor loadings during factor analysis in the Round 6 and Round 7 data sets (see Table 3.2). The reliability measure of Cronbach's alpha was then tested. In Round 6, Cronbach's alpha was valued at 0.566 and in Round 7, it was valued at 0.513. Following the results of these statistical measures, Media Usage Variable 2 was computed in rounds 6 and 7 of the data sets.

Table 3.2: Factor analysis: Media Usage Variable 2

Question index	Factor loadings: Round 6	Factor loadings: Round 7
Radio	0.572	0.69
Television	0.593	0.616
Newspapers	0.777	0.719
Internet	0.690	0.529

To compute Phase 1 of the independent variable, question items pertaining to the frequency of media usage (radio, television, newspapers and the internet) were computed into two different variables, Media Usage Variable 1 and 2. These two variables were renamed and the same response categories and coding as the original variables were kept. The more detailed the response categories can be kept the better, as collapsing response categories can result in a loss of important information (De Vaus, 2001:259). The response categories are, therefore, as follows: 'every day', 'a few times a week', 'a few times a month', 'less than once a month' and 'never'. Both media usage variables had the same recoded response categories.

3.7.2 Phase 2

Phase 2 tested the effect of each individual media platform. Separate tests were, therefore, performed for all four media platforms: the frequency of exposure to political news via radio, television, newspapers and the internet. Therefore, in this phase, the media platforms were not constructed into indices. The response categories and the coding categories of the response categories remained unchanged in Phase 2.

The reason for the inclusion of Phase 2 was to account for the lower-than-recommended Cronbach's alpha values for the computed scale media usage variables discussed above in Section 3.7.1. Phase 2 served the purpose of ensuring a deeper and more well-rounded analysis of the correlation between frequency of media usage in South Africa and political trust. Moreover, Phase 2 highlighted any divergences between the influence of each media platform.

3.8 THE OPERATIONALISATION OF THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE: POLITICAL TRUST

The operationalisation of the dependent variable built initially on Easton's (1975) and then Norris' (1999) conceptual frameworks of the objects of political trust. This study focused on four key objects of political trust as opposed to the fivefold conceptual framework of political

trust objects proposed by Norris (1999:9–10). The dependent variable in this study was therefore divided into four different objects of political trust: the political actors, regime institutions (political institutions), regime performance and regime principles, from Norris' (1999:10) framework. The political community is therefore the only level in Norris' (1999) framework that was not examined in this study and is largely due to length limitations.

3.8.1 Political actors

Norris (1999:7) identified political actors as objects of specific support held by citizens in the various political authorities and their evaluations of political incumbents. Political actors were operationalised through two survey questions (see the Appendix). The question items used were as follows: "How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?"[2] and "How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?"[3] The first question was used to access the amount of trust held towards various actors and institutions and the second question to gauge political trust in political actors from perceptions of whether a political actor is corrupt or not. The corruption perception item was utilised to include some actors that were not tapped by the original trust perception items. The use of corruption perceptions to measure political trust is recognised as a secondary measure as mentioned above, and its use has been established internationally (Anderson and Tverdova, 2003:101–102) and within South Africa (Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:21). The specific political actors were identified as the president and the provincial premiers. In the corruption perception question, the following four actors were identified: the president and officials in his office, members of Parliament, government officials and local government councillors.

Two indices of political actors were constructed utilising these actors. The indices included the Political Actors Corruption Index (see Figure 3.3) and the Political Actors Trust Index (see Figure 3.4). The recoded response categories in both the political actors' indices are the same as the original question items.

[2] Response categories and coding: not at all (0), just a little (1), somewhat (2), a lot (3).
[3] Response categories and coding: none (0), some of them (1), most of them (2), all of them (3).

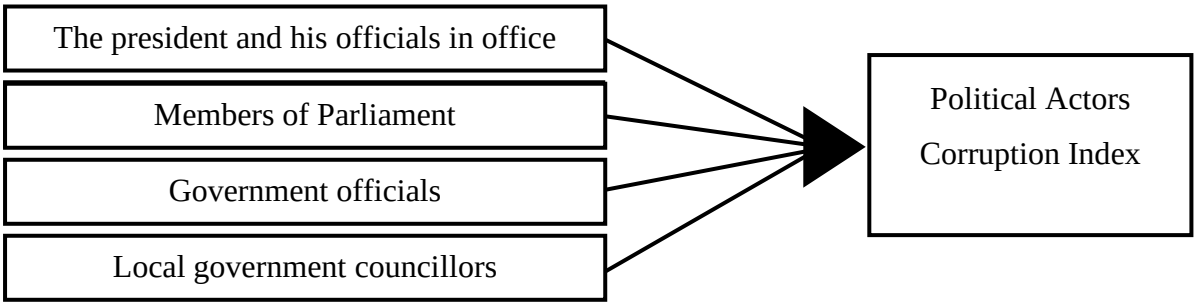

Figure 3.3: Dependent variable: Political Actors Corruption Index

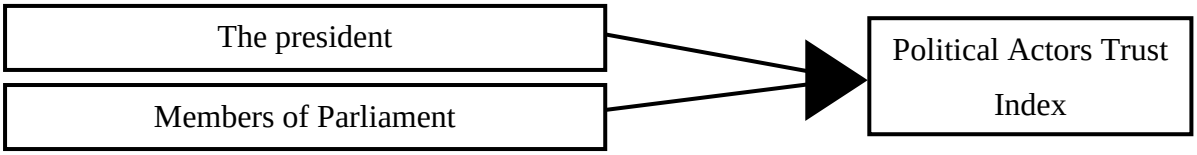

Figure 3.4: Dependent variable: Political Actors Trust Index

When constructing indices in SPSS, various statistical analyses must take place to ensure the compatibility of the question items in the index and the reliability of the constructed index (Field, 2009:629). The statistical analysis was conducted on both political actor indices: The Political Actors Trust Index and the Political Actors Corruption Index, and included factor analysis, the KMO test, the Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis and the statistical significance of Bartlett's test of sphericity.

The statistical analysis revealed the following results for the Political Actors Corruption Index. The KMO test revealed that reliable and satisfactory sampling took place in both survey rounds: in Round 6 the value was 0.82 and in Round 7 the value was 0.819. The KMO test results were well above the recommended value of 0.5 (Field 2009:647). The Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant with a p-value of 0.000 in each survey round. In addition, the question items from survey rounds 6 and 7 both revealed one component with an eigenvalue greater than 1. The eigenvalue was 2.905 on the component greater than 1 in Round 6, and this component explained 72.637% of the variance. Furthermore, the eigenvalue was 2.857 on the component greater than 1 in Round 7, and this component explained 71.421% of the variance. The component matrix revealed very strong factor loadings during factor analysis in rounds 6 and 7 on each question item (see Table 3.3). The reliability analysis of each question index in survey rounds 6 and 7 revealed two highly reliable indices. The Cronbach's alpha value was 0.872 and 0.865 in survey rounds 6 and 7, respectively. It can therefore be concluded that the

question indices were well suited to the formulation of the dependent variable of political actors.

Table 3.3: Factor analysis: Political Actors Corruption Index

Question item	Survey Round 6	Survey Round 7
The president and officials in his office	0.840	0.826
Members of Parliament	0.873	0.864
Government officials	0.892	0.874
Local government councillors	0.801	0.815

The Political Actors Trust Index was also statistically analysed to test the compatibility of the index. The KMO values were 0.5 in both survey rounds. The Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant with a p-value of 0.000 in each survey round of 6 and 7. This index presented one eigenvalue each that was above the value of 1; in survey Round 6, this value was 1.562 and accounted for 78.11% of variance and in survey Round 7, the value was 1.466 and accounted for 73.284% of variance. The component matrix showed very strong factor loadings during factor analysis on the index in each survey round (see Table 3.4). Lastly, the reliability analysis of Cronbach's alpha revealed values of 0.719 in survey Round 6 and 0.635 in survey Round 7. It can therefore be concluded that the question items were well suited to the construction of this index.

Table 3.4: Factor analysis: Political Actors Trust Index

Question item	Survey Round 6	Survey Round 7
The president	0.884	0.856
Provincial premiers	0.884	0.856

3.8.2 Political institutions

Political institutions were operationalised in a similar manner to political actors. The question item used to operationalise political institutions was the same trust question used to create the Political Actors Trust Index (see the Appendix) but using institutions and not actors.[4] Norris (1999:7) conceptualises regime institutions as "governments, Parliaments, the executive, the

[4] Question item: "How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?"

legal system and police, the state bureaucracy, political parties, and the military", although for the purpose of this study specifically, only political institutions were utilised. The political institutions used to operationalise this variable therefore fit Norris' (1999:7) definition of political institutions and include national Parliament, the ruling ANC party, opposition political parties, and local government councils.

To operationalise the identified political institutions, one question index was formulated: The Government Institutions Trust Index (see Figure 3.5). A third Political Parties Index was considered for the question items for the ruling ANC party and the opposition political parties. However, the question items did not lend themselves to creating a reliable index and the question items were then tested individually. The response coding of the indices and the political parties remained the same as the original question item.[5]

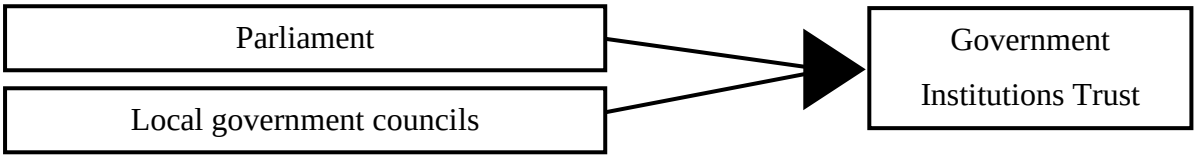

Figure 3.5: Government Institutions Trust Index

Various statistical analyses were conducted on the question index to show the compatibility of question items in the index. The statistical tests included factor analysis, the KMO test, the Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis and the statistical significance of Bartlett's test of sphericity.

The Government Institutions Trust Index in survey rounds 6 and 7 can also be concluded a reliable index due to the results of the statistical analyses. The KMO measure was valued at 0.5 and 0.5 in survey rounds 6 and 7, respectively. A p-value of 0.000 was established in each survey round with Bartlett's test of sphericity; therefore, this measure was statistically significant. The Government Institutions Trust Index in each survey round also revealed one component each with an eigenvalue greater than 1. This eigenvalue was valued 1.482 in survey Round 6 and 1.441 in survey Round 7. The component in Round 6 accounted for 74.11% of variance and the component in Round 7 attributed 72.037% of variance. Furthermore, the component matrix revealed strong factor loadings in each survey round (see Table 3.6). The

[5] Response categories and coding: not at all (0), just a little (1), somewhat (2), a lot (3).

Cronbach's alpha reliability measure was dependably valued at 0.651 in survey Round 6 and 0.612 in survey Round 7.

Table 3.5: Factor analysis: Government Institutions Trust Index

Question item	Survey Round 6	Survey Round 7
Parliament	0.861	0.849
Local government councils	0.861	0.849

3.8.3 Regime performance and regime principles

Regime principles and regime performance constitute the third and fourth levels of Norris' (1999) conceptual framework. Regime principles refer to the "values of the political system" (Norris, 1999:11). South Africa is a democratic state; therefore, regime principles were operationalised through determining the level of agreement with the idea that democracy is the preferential option to govern a country. The item asked the respondents to identify which statement was closest to their own beliefs. The statements were as follows: "Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government", "In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable" and "For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have." This operationalisation of regime principles was in line with Norris' framework (1999:11). The response categories and coding of this question remained unchanged.[6]

Regime performance is defined by Norris (1999:11) as "support for how authoritarian or democratic political systems function in practice". Regime performance was operationalised through a widely accepted measure of satisfaction with democracy (Norris, 1999:11). The questions asked the respondents to identify how satisfied they were with the way democracy works in South Africa. The response categories remain the same and are 'very satisfied', 'fairly satisfied', 'not very satisfied', 'not at all satisfied' and 'South Africa is not a democracy'.[7]

3.9 STATISTICAL TESTS

[6] The coding of statements: Statement 1: "Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government" (3); Statement 2: "In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable" (2); Statement 3: "For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have" (1).

[7] Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in South Africa? The response categories and their coding: very satisfied (4), fairly satisfied (3), not very satisfied (2), not at all satisfied (1), South Africa is not a democracy (0).

SPSS was used to determine the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The independent variable was frequency of media usage (phases 1 and 2) and the dependent variable was the various objects of political trust. The Media Usage Variable 1 and 2 (see Section 3.7.1) were each statistically tested against each specified object of political support in both Afrobarometer survey rounds 6 and 7, as follows:

1. Political actors: Political Actors Corruption Index and Political Actors Trust Index
2. Political institutions: Government Institutions Trust Index and the two political parties' variables
3. Regime performance and regime principles: Democratic support and democratic satisfaction.

There are two umbrella types of statistical analysis in existence to determine the level of association between variables, namely the chi-square-based and the proportional reduction of error (PRE) measures (De Vaus, 2001:254). In this study, PRE measures (summary statistics or measures of association) are employed to determine the correlation between the independent and dependent variables. PRE measures indicate "how much better we can predict a person's score on a variable given the knowledge of another variable" (De Vaus, 2001:257). The PRE measures reveal a result between the values of 0 and 1: the closer the value is to 1, the stronger the correlation is between the two variables. For example, a value of 0.8 improves the accuracy of the prediction by 80%, in comparison to a value of 0.1, which improves the accuracy of the prediction by 10% (De Vaus, 2001:257). The PRE measures thus determine the strength and direction of the association between two variables (De Vaus, 2001:257–258).

The level of measurement determines the statistical tests that are conducted for PRE measures (De Vaus, 2001:257). The level of measurement in this study are ordinal variables. Ordinal variables are categorical variables in the sense that the question item's response categories are formulated into logical, ordered groupings (Field, 2009:8–10). All the variables within the independent and dependent variables in this study were ordinal variables. As demonstrated in sections 3.7, 3.8.1, 3.8.2 and 3.8.3, the constructed indices used to operationalise political actors and institutions, and the relevant question items used to operationalise democratic satisfaction, had ordered response categories.

There were two summary statistics considered for this study, Kendall's Tau and Spearman's Rho. Both correlation coefficients are suitable to use for ordinal by ordinal variables with many response categories (De Vaus, 2001:259). Kendall's Tau is the best measure of association

when one variable has a lot of categories. Spearman's rho is the preferred correlation coefficient for variables with a lot of categories (De Vaus, 2001:259). Therefore, Spearman's Rho is the most appropriate correlation coefficients for this study.

Furthermore, to establish the significance of the results, a Significance Test is conducted (p-value). The p-value is between one and zero, and the lower the p-value the greater the chance that the association determined by the measure of association did not occur by chance (De Vaus, 2001:269-270). The guideline is that summary statistics are significant at the 0.05 level, therefore the chance that the correlation coefficients occurred by chance is less than 5% (Field, 2009:51).

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research was conducted in full compliance with Stellenbosch University's ethical code. The research proposal was submitted to the relevant authorities, the Departmental Ethics Screening Committee (DESC), to gain ethical approval prior to the commencement of the research. The purpose of submitting a proposal for ethical review is "to contribute to safeguarding the dignity, rights, safety, and well-being of all actual or potential participants in social, behavioural, economic and educational research conducted at Stellenbosch University" (Stellenbosch University, 2019).

Afrobarometer data is secondary, publicly available data. The data has already been collected, has undergone rigorous ethical clearance procedures and is publicly available on the Afrobarometer website. The survey respondents for the Afrobarometer data sets are anonymous, and have a minimum risk of revealing the identity of the respondents. It was therefore highly unlikely that ethical problems would arise with regard to conducting this research, as the probability of harm or discomfort experienced by respondents was not greater than that to which they would be exposed in daily life.

3.11 THE LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was primarily a cross-sectional study, although there was a longitudinal element because of the inclusion of two data sets. Without a longer series of data sets, it is difficult to establish an ongoing pattern in attitudes and behaviour over time. It can also be argued that there is an element of bias in this study regarding the importance of context. The study sought to better understand the relationship between media usage and political trust in the South African context. However, the time period from which the statistical inferences were drawn

was a time in South Africa when many political trust violations occurred and were likely to have negatively shaped public trust. However, the researcher has little control over the external context. In fact, the high level of corruption allegations may instead have provided an ideal environment for the study by accentuating the public role that the media plays in revealing misdemeanours in government.

3.12 CONCLUSION

The method adopted for this study was a quantitative methodology using social scientific survey analysis and closely reflected the research methods and design of other similar studies in the global literature. This study utilised survey data from the most recent Afrobarometer survey rounds 6 and 7 to examine the correlation between the independent and dependent variables. The conceptualisation and operationalisation of the key variables were based on Norris' (1999) conceptual framework regarding political trust. The independent variable consisted of two iterations. Phase 1 tested a constructed index for frequency of media usage (all media platforms) and a more limited index with only traditional media sources (excluding the internet). Phase 2 tests all four individual media platforms separately. The three levels of Norris' (1999) framework that made up the dependent variables were operationalised as follows: political actors were operationalised through a Political Actors Corruption Index and Political Actors Trust Index, while political institutions were operationalised through a Government Institutions Trust Index and two distinct political parties question items. Regime performance and principles were operationalised using the demand for democracy item and the democratic satisfaction item. The relationships between the independent and dependent variables were tested using the appropriate statistical tests of correlation and Spearman's rho for ordinal by ordinal variables.

CHAPTER 4: EXPOSURE TO POLITICAL NEWS VIA THE MEDIA AND TRUST IN POLITICAL ACTORS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the influence of frequency of media usage to gather news on political trust in political actors. The following chapters explore the effect of news usage on the other objects of political trust, namely political institutions and regime performance and principles. This chapter first discusses corruption and political trust perceptions of South African citizens using descriptive statistics. The next two sections focus on answering the research question specifically focused on political trust in political actors with the relevant indexes and question items.[8]

4.2 TRUST ATTITUDES TOWARDS POLITICAL ACTORS

As explained above, political actors are operationalised into two question indices: Political Actors Corruption Index (president and officials in his office, members of Parliament, government officials and local government councillors) and the Political Actors Trust Index (president and the provincial premiers). The latter is the primary measure for measuring political trust in political actors. Due to the limited number of political actors in this question item, the Political Actors Corruption Index is treated as a secondary measure of political trust.

The frequency percentages of trust in political actors is shown in Table 4.1. Political trust in the president increased slightly between 2015 and 2018, even after the confidence interval is taken into account.[9] The number of citizens who held no trust in the president in 2015 was 39% and in 2018 this number decreased to 29%. Furthermore, the number of people who trusted the president a lot increased from 15% in 2015 to 23% in 2018. The trust in the provincial premiers decreased between 2015 and 2018, although this decrease was slight. The number of people who did not trust the provincial premiers in 2015 was 21%; this then increased to 33% in 2018.

---

[8] **Coding of Media Usage Variable 1 and 2 and the media platforms** (radio, television, newspapers and internet): never (0); less than once a month (1); a few times a month (2); a few times a week (3); every day (4).
Coding of the Political Actors Trust Index and its individual actors (the president and the provincial premiers): not at all (0); just a little (1); somewhat (2); a lot (3).
Coding of the Political Actors Corruption Index and its individual actors (the president and officials in office, members of Parliament, government officials and local government councillors): none of them are corrupt (0); some of them are corrupt (1); most of them are corrupt (2); all of them are corrupt (3).

[9] The confidence interval of the Afrobarometer data is 2%. The margin to determine changes in trust must be greater than a 2% interval in either direction from the percentages examined.

Therefore, an increase in distrust is visible when the confidence intervals are taken into account.

Table 4.1: Political trust in political actors in South Africa

How much do you trust each of the following?	Not at all (%)		Just a little (%)		Somewhat (%)		A lot (%)	
	2015	2018	2015	2018	2015	2018	2015	2018
The president *2015: n = 2370* *2018: n = 1750*	39.3	28.5	26.9	31.6	18.8	17.2	15	22.7
The provincial premiers *2015: n = 2255* *2018: n = 1650*	21.4	33.2	28.6	28.5	28.9	20.4	21	17.9

n = the number of respondents in the statistic

Citizen perceptions of corruption are in Table 4.2. Between the years 2015 and 2018, the citizens' corruption perceptions of the political actors did not change drastically when the confidence intervals were taken into consideration. The frequencies in each response category between 2015 and 2018 remained relatively similar and the citizens perceived the political actors to be similarly corrupt. However, it is evident that the majority of citizens held negative corruption perceptions towards all the political actors in this study. In 2018, the number of citizens who perceived none of the political actors corrupt was as follows: the office of the president: 11%, members of Parliament: 5%, government officials: 6% and local government councillors: 6%. Therefore, the majority of the citizens perceived that the political actors were corrupt to some extent.

Table 4.2: Perceptions of corruption of political actors in South Africa

How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption?	None of them (%)		Some of them (%)		Most of them (%)		All of them (%)	
	2015	2018	2015	2018	2015	2018	2015	2018
The office of the president *2015: n = 2335* *2018: n = 1674*	5.2	10.9	47.4	47.1	27.6	23.1	19.8	18.9
Members of Parliament *2015: n = 2350* *2018: n = 1694*	4.1	5.2	49.6	47.4	33.4	28.1	12.9	19.4

Government officials *2015: n = 2350* *2018: n = 1717*	3.8	5.8	46.2	47.5	35.5	28.7	14.5	17.9
Local government councillors *2015: n = 2352* *2018: n = 1707*	3.8	6.3	47.7	45.6	32.9	27.1	15.5	21

n = the number of respondents in the statistic

Tables 4.3 and 4.4 shows the summary statistics for the correlations between the individual media platforms and the various political actors that make up both indices. This ensures the association between the variables is not obscured through the use of indexes in the following sections.

Table 4.3: Correlations: Individual media platforms and trust in political actors

Independent variable	**Dependent variable**	**Year**	**Correlation coefficient: Spearman**	**Number of respondents in the test (n)**
Radio	The President	2015	0.029	2268
		2018	0.079**	1709
	Provincial Premiers	2015	0.011	2159
		2018	-.026	1604
Television	The President	2015	-0.013	2268
		2018	0.084**	1711
	Provincial Premiers	2015	-0.015	2159
		2018	0.014	1606
Newspaper	The President	2015	-0.033	2266
		2018	0.019	1702
	Provincial Premiers	2015	-0.035	2157
		2018	-0.006	1597
Internet	The President	2015	-0.115**	2259
		2018	-.059*	1683
	Provincial Premiers	2015	-0.047*	2152
		2018	-.058*	1578

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.*

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.*

Table 4.3 does not reveal a large amount of statistically significant correlations. Out of the traditional media platforms only the radio (correlation = 0.079; p-value = 0.001) and television (correlation = 0.084; p-value = 0.001) have a statistically significant association with trust in the President in 2018. An increased usage of radio and television to gather political news in 2018 is associated with higher levels of trust in the President.

The internet has the opposite association to the traditional media platforms. An increased frequency of internet usage to political gather news is associated with less trust in the President and the Provincial Premiers in both years. In 2015 the summary statistic between the frequency of internet usage to gather news and trust in the President was -0.0115 (p-value = 0.000) and trust in the Provincial Premiers was -0.047 (p-value =0.030). This was similarly true in 2018 for trust in the President (correlation = -0.059; p-value = 0.015) and the Provincial Premiers (correlation = -0.058; p-value= 0.021). The correlations between these variables suggest an inverse relationship.

Table 4.4: Correlations: Individual media platforms and corruption perception of political actors

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Year	Correlation coefficient: Spearman	Number of respondents in the test (n)
Radio	The President and Officials in Office	2015	-0.065**	2233
		2018	-0.021	1634
	Members of Parliament	2015	-0.055**	2247
		2018	0.007	1653
	Government officials	2015	-0.029	2248
		2018	0.005	1674
	Local government councillors	2015	0.016	2249
		2018	-0.016	1664
Television	The President and Officials in Office	2015	0.019	2233
		2018	-0.052*	1634
	Members of Parliament	2015	0.008	2247
		2018	-0.018	1655
	Government officials	2015	0.021	2248
		2018	-0.031	1676

	Local government councillors	2015	-0.028	2249
		2018	-0.041	1666
Newspapers	The President and Officials in Office	2015	0.068**	2231
		2018	-0.048*	1625
	Members of Parliament	2015	0.057**	2245
		2018	-0.045	1649
	Government officials	2015	0.068**	2246
		2018	-0.036	1670
	Local government councillors	2015	0.072**	2247
		2018	-0.046*	1660
Internet	The President and Officials in Office	2015	0.124**	2224
		2018	0.039	1605
	Members of Parliament	2015	0.051*	2238
		2018	0.024	1628
	Government officials	2015	0.069**	2239
		2018	0.036	1649
	Local government councillors	2015	0.037	2240
		2018	0.037	1639

** *Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.*

* *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.*

The traditional media platforms largely suggest an inverse relationship between the frequency of media usage to gather political news and the perceptions of corruption of the political actors. A higher frequency of political news gathering through the radio is associated with lower perceptions of corruption in the President (correlation = -0.065; p-value = 0.002) and members of Parliament (correlation = -0.055; p-value = 0.009) in 2015. This was similarly true for television usage and perceptions of President (correlation = -0.052; p-value = 0.035) in 2018.

Using newspapers to gather political news has a mixed relationship with corruption perceptions. Newspaper usage is associated with higher corruption perceptions for the President (correlation = 0.068; p-value = 0.001), members of Parliament (correlation = 0.057; p-value = 0.007), government officials (correlation = 0.068; p-value = 0.001), and local government councillors (correlation = 0.072; p-value = 0.001) in 2015. However, in 2018 an inverse relationship is largely visible.

In contrast to the traditional platforms, internet usage is associated with higher corruption perceptions. This includes the president (correlation = 0.124; p-value = 0.000), members of Parliament (correlation = 0.051; p-value = 0.015), and government officials (correlation = 0.069; p-value = 0.001) in 2015.

4.3 FREQUENCY OF MEDIA USAGE AND POLITICAL TRUST OF POLITICAL ACTORS: PHASE 1

This section comprises phase 1. As such, it examines the association between the two media usage variables (variable 1 includes radio, television and newspapers and variable 2 includes the internet) and the two constructed indices: the Political Actors Corruption Index and the Political Actors Trust Index (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5: Correlations: Media usage variables and the political actor indices

Independent variables	Dependent variables	Year	Correlation coefficient: Spearman	Number of respondents in the test (n)
Media usage variable 1	Political Actors Corruption Index	2015	0.017	2207
		2018	-0.070**	1559
	Political Actors Trust Index	2015	-0.008	2148
		2018	0.025	1564
Media usage variable 2	Political Actors Corruption Index	2015	0.053*	2200
		2018	-0.023	1539
	Political Actors Trust Index	2015	-0.051*	2143
		2018	-0.006	1545

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.*

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.*

Media Usage Variable 1 only produces one statistically significant correlation and this correlation is with the Political Actors Corruption Index and reveals an inverse association. In 2018, an increased exposure to political news is associated with citizens being less likely to perceive the political actors to be corrupt (correlation = -0.070; p-value = 0.006).

Media Usage Variable 2 reveals a different association between the variables in comparison to Media Usage Variable 1. In 2015 the correlations between Media Usage Variable 2 and both political actor indices were statistically significant. An increased exposure to political news is

associated with higher corruption perceptions among political actors (correlation = 0.053; p-value= 0.014) and were similarly more likely to distrust the political actors (correlation= -0.051; p-value= 0.017). Therefore, the inclusion of the internet as a political news source into Media Usage Variable 2 resulted in a change in the direction of the relationship.

4.4 FREQUENCY OF MEDIA USAGE AND POLITICAL TRUST OF POLITICAL ACTORS: PHASE 2

Phase 2 examines the independent and separate effects of the individual media platforms (radio, television, newspapers and the internet) on political trust towards actors. The tests again use the Political Actors Corruption Index and the Political Actors Trust Index (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.6: Correlations: Individual media platforms and the political actor indices

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Year	Correlation coefficient: Spearman	Number of respondents in the test (n)
Radio	Political Actors Corruption Index	2015	-0.029	2209
		2018	0.004	1567
	Political Actors Trust Index	2015	0.024	2150
		2018	0.020	1575
Television	Political Actors Corruption Index	2015	-0.004	2209
		2018	-0.057*	1567
	Political Actors Trust Index	2015	-0.015	2150
		2018	0.050*	1577
Newspapers	Political Actors Corruption Index	2015	0.064**	2207
		2018	-0.063*	1561
	Political Actors Trust Index	2015	-0.036	2148
		2018	0.005	1568
Internet	Political Actors Corruption Index	2015	0.077**	2200
		2018	0.060*	1541
	Political Actors Trust Index	2015	-0.085**	2143
		2018	-0.065*	1549

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.*

** Correlations significant at the 0.05 level.*

Gathering political news from the television revealed a limited number of statistically significant correlations. The correlations between the Political Actors Corruption Index and the television variable were statistically significant in 2018 (correlation = -.057; p-value = 0.025). It was not a strong association and showed an inverse relationship between the variables. Therefore, the citizens who used the television to gather political news were more likely to perceive the political actors to be less corrupt in 2018. A similar association is visible between the Political Actors Trust Index and the television variable (correlation = 0.050; p-value= 0.048). Therefore, a high exposure of political news via the television is associated with higher levels of trust towards the political actors.

For newspapers, the correlations with the Political Actors Corruption Index showed that in 2015, a higher frequency of news gathering from newspapers was associated with higher perceptions of corruption among political actors (correlation =0.064; p-value = 0.002). And yet in 2018, the citizens were less likely to perceive the political actors as corrupt if they had a higher frequency of gathering news from newspapers (correlation = -0.063; p-value = 0.013).

Internet usage had the most noticeable effect on the Political Actors Corruption Index and the Political Actors Trust Index. The correlations with the Political Actors Trust Index and the internet usage were statistically significant in 2015 and 2018. The correlations were as follows: correlation was valued at -0.085 (p-value = 0.000) in 2015 and -0.065 (p-value = 0.011) in 2018. These correlations showed an inverse relationship. Therefore, an increase in frequency of internet usage to gather political news was associated with less political trust in political actors. The correlations between these variables remained as an inverse relationship in both survey rounds.

The correlations between frequency of internet usage and the Political Actors Corruption Index revealed a similar association to the internet usage variable and the Political Actors Trust Index. Citizens who frequently used the internet to gather news were more likely to perceive the political actors to be corrupt in 2015 and 2018, seen in the correlation statistics: 0.077 (p-value = 0.000) in 2015 and 0.060 (p-value = 0.018) in 2018. Therefore, frequency of internet usage to gather political news negatively shaped both citizens' trust and citizens' corruption perceptions and supported the media malaise hypothesis.

4.5 DISCUSSION

The correlations between the independent and the dependent variable within this chapter is varied. The strength and the amount of the statistically significant correlations between the

dependent and independent variables show that frequent media usage to gather political news does not have a very strong effect on popular levels of trust in political actors. Nevertheless, some key findings emerge. In Phase 1, there is most support for Hypothesis 3, the null hypothesis, that the frequency of media usage to gather political news does not affect citizen's political trust in political actors or corruption perceptions. However, where the summary statistics were statistically significant, the level of association between the variables revealed divergent and interesting correlations. In Phase 1 gathering political news from the traditional media platforms (Media Usage Variable 1) was associated with higher levels of trust amongst the citizens towards political actors. Yet, when internet usage to gather political news was included into the media usage variable (Media Usage Variable 2) the citizens were more likely to distrust the political actors. Therefore, traditional media usage has a positive association with political trust and supports the virtuous circle hypothesis (Hypothesis 2) while the associations between the variables and Media Usage Variable 2 supports the media malaise hypothesis (Hypothesis 1). The only difference between Media Usage Variable 1 and Media Usage Variable 2 is the inclusion and exclusion of the internet as a political news source. Thus, its inclusion or exclusion as a source of political news influenced support for two divergent hypotheses.

Phase 2 showcases similar results to phase 1. Most correlations are not statistically significant giving support again to hypothesis 3. However, a few interesting associations emerge. Firstly, traditional media platforms are least likely to affect trust in political actors. The statistically significant correlations were mostly supportive of the virtuous circle hypothesis (Hypothesis 2). This finding confirms the phase 1 results. Secondly, the internet was the only media platform in this chapter to produce statistically significant results with both political actor indices in 2015 and 2018. Using the internet as a political news source was associated with lower levels of trust towards the political actors, therefore, this association is supportive of the media malaise hypothesis (Hypothesis 1), again supporting phase 1 findings. Gathering political news from the internet also produced the strongest correlations of all the individual media platforms.

4.6 CONCLUSION: DEMOCRATIC CONSEQUENCES

While many South Africans are distrustful of their political actors, an increase in the frequency of media usage has a varied influence on political trust. Political support that is associated to this object is that of specific support (Norris, 1999:10). Specific support is intertwined with the

judgements that the citizens hold towards the political actors. In the case of political actors, the erosion of specific support for this object is not detrimental to the democratic political system. It is not abnormal for support for political actors to ebb during the course of democratic politics. Therefore, the distrust in political actors visible in South Africa is not directly tied to a failing democracy but is rather seen as a natural democratic process (see Norris, 1999:25).

Therefore, there is no overwhelming evidence to suggest that frequency of media usage to gather political news has shaped the specific support or trust that citizens extend to political actors in a very significant manner. Instead, its affect is varied depending on the media platforms. Interestingly, while the internet is the least utilised media platform in South Africa it appears to generate the most distrust in political actors and suggests some media malaise effects. In summary, although a large number of South Africans distrust their political actors, the frequency of media usage is not a factor that significantly shapes distrust, and the distrust in the political actors is not necessarily detrimental to the political system.

CHAPTER 5: EXPOSURE TO POLITICAL NEWS VIA THE MEDIA AND TRUST IN POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the association between frequency of media usage (to gather political news) on trust in political institutions. As discussed in Chapter 3, Norris' (1999) conceptual framework provided the conceptual base for determining the objects of support used to operationalise political trust in institutions. The political institutions examined were as follows: Parliament, local government councils, the ruling political party (the ANC) and opposition political parties. This chapter starts with a descriptive view of the attitudes towards these institutions and then determines the level of association between the relevant variables.[10]

5.2 TRUST TOWARDS POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

Political trust in institutions is shown in Table 5.1. A fair amount of distrust is observable in Parliament, local government councils, the ANC and the opposition political parties. Furthermore, mistrust in political institutions (not at all) increased slightly for all the political institutions between 2015 and 2018 after confidence intervals are considered. For Parliament, this increased from 27% to 34% of the citizens between 2015 and 2018. Between 2015 and 2018, the number of citizens increased from 32% to 44%. The number of citizens who held no trust in the ANC increased from 32% to 37%. And lastly, distrust in the opposition political parties increased from 30% to 43% between 2015 and 2018. Only a minority expressed trust in political institutions, and this remains static across the two surveys after confidence intervals are considered. In 2018, 16% of citizens held a lot of trust in Parliament and 15% towards local government councils. Between 21% and 24% expressed a lot of trust in the ANC; in 2018, while approximately 12% trusted opposition political parties a lot.

[10] **Coding of Media Usage Variable 1 and 2 and the media platforms** (radio, television, newspapers and internet): never (0); less than once a month (1); a few times a month (2); a few times a week (3); every day (4).
Coding of the Government Institutions Trust Index and the individual institutions (Parliament, Local government councils, The ANC party and Opposition political parties): not at all (0); just a little (1); somewhat (2); a lot (3).

Table 5.1: Political trust in political institutions in South Africa

How much do you trust each of the following?	Not at all (%)		Just a little (%)		Somewhat (%6)		A lot (%)	
	2015	**2018**	**2015**	**2018**	**2015**	**2018**	**2015**	**2018**
Parliament *2015: n = 2361* *2018: n = 1765*	26.5	34.1	32	32.7	26.6	17.7	15	15.5
Local government councils *2015: n = 2331* *2018: n = 1711*	32	43.5	31.9	26	23.6	15.5	12.5	15
The ANC party *2015: n = 2365* *2018: n = 1786*	32.0	36.9	24.6	24.1	22.3	14.6	21.0	24.4
Opposition political parties *2015: n = 2311* *2018: n = 1765*	30.4	42.7	32.4	29.8	24.7	16.0	12.5	11.5

n = the number of respondents in the statistic

Table 5.2 shows the correlations between trust and political institutions across individual media platforms. The objective of this table is to test each institution separately. Immediately it is clear that Parliament is most affected by media usage.

Table 5.2: Correlations: Individual media platforms, Parliament and local councils

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Year	Correlation coefficient: Spearman	Number of respondents in the test (n)
Radio	Parliament	2015	0.044*	2261
		2018	-0.012	1718
	Local government council	2015	0.006	2230
		2018	0.010	1663
Television	Parliament	2015	-0.020	2261
		2018	0.072**	1720
	Local government council	2015	0.018	2230
		2018	0.039	1665
Newspaper	Parliament	2015	-0.025	2260
		2018	0.036	1711

	Local government council	2015	0.008	2228
		2018	0.036	1657
Internet	Parliament	2015	-0.064**	2254
		2018	-0.057*	1691
	Local government council	2015	-0.029	2221
		2018	-0.059*	1635

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.*

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.*

Generally, frequency of news gathering through traditional media platforms does have an association with institutional trust. The few significant correlation shows increased frequency of news gathering is associated with higher trust levels. An increased frequency of radio usage and television respectively to gather news the is associated with the citizens to being likely to trust the Parliament in 2015 (correlation= 0.044; p-value= 0.037) and Parliament in 2018 (correlation= 0.072; p-value= 0.003).

In contrast, as table 5.2 shows, internet is clearly associated with lower institutional trust in the Parliament in 2015 (correlation = -0.064; p-value = 0.002) and 2018 (correlation = -0.057; p-value = 0.019), and trust in the local government councils in 2018 (correlation = -0.059; p-value = 0.017).

Trust in the Parliament is the institution most affected by political news gathering. All the media platforms, except newspapers, shape trust in Parliament in some form. The Parliament finds statistical significance the most. Trust in local government councils was only influenced by internet usage as opposed to that of the Parliament.

5.3 FREQUENCY OF MEDIA USAGE AND POLITICAL TRUST OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS: PHASE 1

The correlations between frequency of media usage and Media Usage Variable 1 (radio, television and newspapers) and Media Usage Variable 2 (radio, television, newspapers and the internet) are shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Correlations: Media usage variables and trust in political institutions

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Year	Correlation coefficient: Spearman	Number of respondents in the test (n)
Media Usage Variable 1	Government Institutions Trust Index	2015	0.008	2210
		2018	0.031	1619
	The ruling ANC party	2015	-0.038	2261
		2018	0.010	1729
	Opposition political parties	2015	0.050*	2206
		2018	0.070**	1714
Media Usage Variable 2	Government Institutions Trust Index	2015	-0.028	2203
		2018	-0.004	1599
	The ruling ANC party	2015	-0.081**	2254
		2018	-0.059*	1707
	Opposition political parties	2015	0.053*	2200
		2018	0.080**	1691

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.*

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.*

The Government Institutions Trust Index is not statistically significant. However, both indices showed statistically significant relationships with the political parties. Exposure to political news is associated with greater trust in opposition parties. In 2015, the correlation between Media Usage Variable 1 and the opposition political parties was 0.050 and the p-value was 0.020; a similar, albeit slightly stronger, association was detected in 2018 (correlation = 0.070; p-value = 0.004). The correlations between Media Usage Variable 2 and the opposition parties were also statistically significant in 2015 and 2018. The correlation coefficients between these variables were 0.053 (p-value = 0.012) in 2015 and 0.080 (p-value = 0.001) in 2018. These positive correlations demonstrated again that citizens were more likely to trust the opposition parties when they gathered political news more frequently. Furthermore, these correlations had gained strength between 2015 and 2018; the correlation in 2018 was highly statistically significant.

The correlations between Media Usage Variable 2 and trust in the ANC are statistically significant in both survey rounds. In 2015, correlation was valued at -0.081 (p-value = 0.000)

and in 2018 this value was -0.059 (p-value = 0.014). The negative values showed an inverse relationship between the variables, therefore the higher the frequency of media usage, the more likely the citizens will distrust the ANC. This correlation between the variables also grew slightly stronger between the years 2015 and 2018.

Therefore, the relationship between frequency of media usage and trust in political parties appears to be the most important of all the political institutions, with trust travelling in different directions depending on incumbency or not.

5.4 FREQUENCY OF MEDIA USAGE AND POLITICAL TRUST OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS: PHASE 2

Recall that phase 2 tests the dependent variables on individual media platforms, as shown in table 5.4.

5.4: Correlations: Individual media platforms and trust in political institutions

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Year	Correlation coefficient: Spearman	Number of respondents in the test (n)
Radio	Government Institutions Trust Index	2015	0.030	2211
		2018	0.004	1629
	The ruling ANC party	2015	0.020	2263
		2018	0.000	1739
	Opposition political parties	2015	0.047*	2208
		2018	0.028	1723
Television	Government Institutions Trust Index	2015	-0.005	2211
		2018	0.052*	1631
	The ruling ANC party	2015	-0.044*	2263
		2018	0.054*	1741
	Opposition political parties	2015	0.043*	2208
		2018	0.063**	1725
Newspapers	Government Institutions Trust Index	2015	-0.006	2210
		2018	0.034	1623
	The ruling ANC party	2015	-0.071**	2261
		2018	-0.032	1733
		2015	0.059**	2206

	Opposition political parties	2018	0.061*	1718
Internet	Government Institutions Trust Index	2015	-0.045*	2203
		2018	-0.064*	1603
	The ruling ANC party	2015	-0.111**	2254
		2018	-0.173**	1711
	Opposition political parties	2015	0.032	2200
		2018	0.019	1695

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.*

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.*

The correlations show that an increase in radio usage to gather political news is associated with greater trust the opposition political parties in 2015 (correlation = 0.047; p-value = 0.026). However, television usage shows mixed results. It is associated with higher levels of trust in government institutions in 2018 (correlation = 0.052; p-value = 0.036) and trust in the opposition political parties in 2015 (correlation = 0.043; p-value = 0.042) and 2018 (correlation = 0.063; p-value= 0.009). is negatively associated with trust in the ANC in 2015 (correlation = -0.044; p-value = 0.038) but positively in 2018 (correlation = 0.054; p-value = 0.025).

Political news gathering from newspapers have a varied relationship with political parties. Newspaper usage is negatively associated the ANC Party (correlation = -0.071; p-value = 0.001) but is associated with higher levels of trust in opposition political parties in 2015 (correlation = 0.059; p-value = 0.006) and in 2018 (correlation = 0.061; p-value = 0.011). Finally, frequent internet usage is associated with greater distrust in government institutions and the ANC, in 2015 and in 2018.

5.5 DISCUSSION

Trust in political institutions, including government institutions, the ANC party and opposition political parties, decreased between the years 2015 and 2018. Furthermore, the majority (over 50%) of citizens distrusted political institutions in 2018. This confirms similar decreases in political trust in South Africa identified by other scholars (Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg 2016).

The statistically significant findings revealed interesting results. It appears that opposition parties have benefitted from increased trust perceptions among citizens who gather news regularly which suggests virtuous circle (Hypothesis 2) effects. The opposite held true for the

ANC, as citizens were more likely to distrust this institution if they regularly gathered political news (Hypothesis 3).

However, and overall, frequent exposure to political news has a weak and mixed effects on trust levels towards other political institutions. Sourcing political news from the traditional media platforms, radio, television, and newspapers, had the weakest sway on trust in institutions. Furthermore, the correlations were largely supportive of the virtuous circle hypothesis (Hypothesis 2). On the other hand, gathering political news from the internet influenced political trust in a negative manner (Hypothesis 1) in all institutions in Phase 2 except for the opposition political parties. The correlations between gathering political news from the internet and trust in political institutions also showcase the strongest associations between the variables.

5.6 CONCLUSION: DEMOCRATIC CONSEQUENCES

Political distrust in South African political institutions has increased. Support of government institutions is characterised as specific support (Norris, 1999:25–26). However, the consequences of declining support in these institutions are more severe compared to that of political actors. An increase in disillusionment with the institutions can negatively affect the democratic state. Political institutions are not able to be voted out as actors are. Increased dissatisfaction with the political institutions can negatively shape the reservoir of diffuse support that is essential to the survival of a democracy (Norris, 1999:25–26). The key findings in this section are that the internet had the strongest influence on the trust in the political institutions, and it influenced the citizens to be less trusting of the political institutions. Moreover, there were differences in how the trust in the political parties' variables was affected by the frequency of media usage to gather political news. An increased frequency of media usage to gather political news through all the platforms increased the citizens' trust in the opposition political parties but not in the governing party.

CHAPTER 6: EXPOSURE TO POLITICAL NEWS VIA THE MEDIA AND TRUST IN REGIME PERFORMANCE AND REGIME PRINCIPLES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines associations between trust in regime performance and regime principles and frequency of media usage to gather political news. Regime performance and regime principles form part of Norris' (1999) conceptual framework for operationalising political trust. Political trust in these objects is vital for the survival of a democracy (Norris 1999:16-20).

Regime performance was measured though the South African citizens' satisfaction with democracy item. Support for regime principles was measured through the citizens' demand for a democratic government. A descriptive view of democratic satisfaction and democratic support in South Africa is followed by correlations between frequency of media usage and demand for and satisfaction with democracy.[11] A discussion of the findings and their support of the various hypotheses follows.

6.2 TRUST ATTITUDES TOWARDS REGIME PERFORMANCE AND PRINCIPLES

Table 6.1 shows a decrease in democratic satisfaction between 2015 and 2018. The number of citizens 'not at all satisfied' and 'not very satisfied' increased from 51% in 2015 to 57% in 2018. Similarly, the number of citizens who were either 'fairly satisfied' or 'very satisfied' decreased from 49% to 43% between 2015 and 2018.

Table 6.1: Democratic satisfaction is South Africa

Response category	**2015 (%)** *n = 2345*	**2018 (%)** *n = 1814*
South Africa is not a democracy	0.5	0.4
Not at all satisfied	23.8	30.9
Not very satisfied	26.7	26.2

[11] **Coding of Media Usage Variable 1 and 2 and the media platforms** (radio, television, newspapers and internet): never (0); less than once a month (1); a few times a month (2); a few times a week (3); every day (4).
Coding of regime performance variable (democratic satisfaction): South Africa is not a democracy (0); not at all satisfied (1); not very satisfied (2); fairly satisfied (3); very satisfied (4).
Coding of regime principles variable (support for democracy): Statement 3: Doesn't matter (1); Statement 2: Sometimes non-democratic preferable (2); Statement 1: Democracy preferable (3).

Fairly satisfied	37.7	30.7
Very satisfied	11.3	11.8

n = the number of respondents in the statistic

Similarly, demand for democracy declined between 2015 and 2018. In 2015, 66% of citizens identified that democracy was the preferable form of governance; in 2018, this figure had declined to 55% of citizens (see table 6.2). This decrease in democratic support resulted a large increase among citizens stating that it 'doesn't matter' what type of political system is in place.

Table 6.2: Support for democracy in South Africa

Response category	**2015 (%)** *n = 2306*	**2018 (%)** *n = 1786*
Statement 3: Doesn't matter	15.9	26.0
Statement 2: Sometimes non-democratic preferable	18.0	18.9
Statement 1: Democracy preferable	66.1	55.1

n = the number of respondents in the statistic

6.3 FREQUENCY OF MEDIA USAGE AND POLITICAL TRUST IN REGIME PERFORMANCE AND REGIME PRINCIPLES: PHASE 1

The frequency of media usage to gather political news, measured through Media Usage Variable 1 and 2 does not show many statistically significant associations with democratic satisfaction or democratic demand (Table 6.3). The only significant correlation was between Media Usage Variable 1 and democratic satisfaction in 2015 (correlation= 0.040; p-value = 0.056). Therefore, in 2015, those who frequently used traditional media platforms were more likely to be satisfied with democracy.

Table 6.3: Correlations: Media usage variables, regime performance and regime support

Independent variables	**Dependent variables**	**Year**	**Correlation coefficient: Spearman**	**Number of respondents in the test (n)**
Media usage variable 1	Regime performance	2015	0.040*	2243
		2018	0.017	1757
	Regime principles	2015	-0.004	2284
		2018	0.014	1732

Media usage variable 2	Regime performance	2015	0.030	2236
		2018	0.015	1734
	Regime principles	2015	-0.007	2277
		2018	0.016	1710

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.*

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.*

6.4 FREQUENCY OF MEDIA USAGE AND POLITICAL TRUST IN REGIME PERFORMANCE AND REGIME PRINCIPLES: PHASE 2

As with Phase 1, most of the correlations in phase 2 are not statistically significant. The exceptions included the correlations between regime performance and television (2018) and radio (2015) (see Table 6.4). In 2015, radio usage shaped the citizens democratic satisfaction positively in South Africa (correlation = 0.062; p-value = 0.003). In addition, television usage to gather political news influenced the citizens to be more likely to be satisfied with democracy in South Africa (correlation = 0.053; p-value = 0.025).

Table 6.4: Correlations: Individual media platforms, regime performance and regime principles

Independent variables	**Dependent variables**	**Year**	**Correlation coefficient: Spearman**	**Number of respondents in the test (n)**
Radio	Regime performance	2015	0.062**	2245
		2018	-0.020	1768
	Regime principles	2015	0.002	2286
		2018	0.008	1743
Television	Regime performance	2015	0.040	2245
		2018	0.053*	1770
	Regime principles	2015	0.007	2286
		2018	0.040	1745
Newspaper	Regime performance	2015	-0.016	2243
		2018	-0.010	1761
	Regime principles	2015	0.013	2284
		2018	0.005	1736

Internet	Regime performance	2015	0.002	2236
		2018	0.031	1738
	Regime principles	2015	-0.011	2277
		2018	0.008	1714

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.*

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.*

6.5 DISCUSSION

Support for democracy and satisfaction with democracy are vital for the survival of a democratic political system (Norris, 1999:16-20). While citizen satisfaction with regime performance and support for the democratic regime has decreased frequency of media usage to gather political news does not appear to have any direct effect on either. The exceptions suggest that political news gleaned from radio and television usage promoted democratic satisfaction among citizens. Overall, the findings are supportive of Hypothesis 3: that media usage to gather political news does not shape demand for democracy. Satisfaction with democracy had mixed results, because the findings lent some support to Hypothesis 2, that frequency of media usage to source political news influences political trust positively.

6.6 CONCLUSION: DEMOCRATIC CONSEQUENCES

Support for democracy and democratic satisfaction are essential to the survival of a democratic political system (Norris 1999:16-20). Both of these are targets of diffuse support. Diffuse support is a deep-seated satisfaction with the democratic political system. The decrease in the reservoir of deep-seated diffuse support may have negative effects on the political system and is essential for tolerating periods where a low amount of specific support exists (Norris, 1999:26).These targets have both decreased in recent years among the South African citizenry. However, the frequency of media usage to gather political news does not appear to be directly linked to this decrease. If anything, satisfaction with democracy was shaped positively in various instances by the frequency of media usage.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This study examines the association between frequency of exposure to political news via various media sources and levels political trust extended towards political actors, political institutions, regime performance, and regime principles. The media and political trust have a contentious association with one another. Two alternating schools of thought exist that attempt to explain how these two variables affect one another. Both the media malaise and the virtuous circle schools of thought are supported by evidence set out in global studies.

The political context of a state not only influences the content of media coverage but also shapes levels of political trust among citizens. In South Africa, citizens are widely exposed to the political context and political news through frequent exposure to their chosen media platforms. This reasoning lead to the expectation that a high frequency of sourcing (largely negative) political news would have a negative association on levels of political trust in various political objects such as actors, institutions, and the democratic regime more broadly.

7.2 A SYNOPSIS OF THE STUDY

This study began with a rationale and background to explain various factors pertinent to exploring the association between gathering political news and political trust. These included the complex and yet unclear relationship between media usage and political trust, as well as the bias in the literature towards advanced western democracies. South Africa provided a developing, non-western context for this research. South African media institutions cover political news and citizens are widely exposed to the political landscape which has also been tumultuous over recent years with various political scandals and allegations of corruption.

Political trust has decreased over the years in South Africa. Yet, little is known about the effects of exposure media coverage of political news on levels of political trust in South Africa. The significance of this study lies in exploring which of the contrasting explanations about the influence of the media on trust applies to the South African case. As discussed, the malaise and the virtuous circle schools of thought argue that media usage can shape political trust in different ways and thus pose different implications for democracy in South Africa.

If gathering political news negatively shapes political trust, such as stated by the media malaise school of thought, this could negatively influence the democratic state in various areas. A malaise caused by the media could increase political apathy, alienation, cynicism, confusion

and even fear amongst the citizenry (Newton, 1999:579). Furthermore, the political disaffection caused by a malaise could reduce political participation and political mobilisation by the citizens in the state (Newton, 1999:581-582; Lin & Lim, 2002:26). On the other hand, the virtuous circle school of thought states that increased political news gathering would positively influence political trust and therefore democracy in the state through various means. The citizens gathering a high frequency of political news will become more politically knowledgeable which positively shapes the citizens civic engagement and mobilisation which in turn enhances democracy in the state (Avery, 2009:412).

7.3 QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

The study finds that exposure to political news in South Africa between 2015 and 2018 has a complex and unexpected association with political trust. The study started with the hypothesis (1) that media malaise would be evident due to the increasingly difficult political context in South Africa and related exposure to large amounts of negative news. However, the results reveal a more complicated association between the variables.

Citizens who gathered political news from traditional media platforms were more likely to trust political actors and democratic institutions, which lends support to for the virtuous circle hypothesis (2). However, citizens who use the internet to gather political news were much more likely to distrust the political actors and the political institutions, suggesting a malaise amongst the internet users in particular towards actors and institutions. Furthermore, the correlations for internet usage were consistently the strongest and produced the most statistically significant correlations in this study.

Moreover, not all political actors and institutions were equally affected. The Political Actors Corruption Index was affected more than the Political Actors Trust Index. Corruption therefore shapes trust more so than perceptions of actors. In addition, political parties were more significant than government institutions. Chapter 5 also revealed an inverse relationship for political parties. Trust in the opposition political parties was more likely to be positively affected by a high rate of political news gathering, whereas the inverse held for the ANC. Furthermore, political trust in the opposition parties was the only trust variable to not be negatively influenced by the citizens internet news gathering habits.

Since political trust in political actors and institutions are not strongly correlated to the frequency of gathering political news, the democratic consequences of trust deficits as a result of exposure to political news were not found to be centrally important. In fact, news exposure

to traditional media platforms was more likely to reveal the virtuous circle hypothesis and promote political trust which is beneficial to a democratic state. The virtuous circle hypothesis suggests that increased gathering of political news would increase political learning and knowledge which could enhance democracy in the state. On the other hand, the citizens who source their political news from the internet, are less trusting of the political actors and institutions. This could potentially negatively influence democracy within a state. The malaise hypothesis suggests that the distrust promoted by political news gathering could negatively impact the democratic culture in a state and potentially work towards undermining the democracy in the state through reducing political participation for example. However, the internet is the least used source by South African citizens to gather political news.

Lastly, satisfaction with the regime performance and support for the regime principles are two essential components in a democratic state (Norris, 1999:16-20). Data shows high levels of dissatisfaction with democracy and only a moderate amount of regime support in 2015 and 2018 in South Africa. Yet, satisfaction with, and support for democracy in South Africa has no meaningful relationship with the exposure of political news in this study. Therefore, the results for these objects are overwhelmingly supportive of Hypothesis 3, the null hypothesis.

7.3.1 Negative impact of the internet on trust: implications for South Africa

The association between internet usage to gather political news and political trust is a key finding in this study. As discussed above, internet usage to gather political news has a strong, inverse relationship with political trust and far more so than gleaning political news from the traditional media platforms.

Some context relating to internet access and usage in South Africa is required. The internet is the least utilised platform to gather political news from in South Africa (see table 1.1). However, access to the internet has increased amongst the South African citizenry. In 2015, 53.5% of South African households had at least one member who had access to or used the internet either at home, work, place of study, or at internet cafés (Stats SA, 2017:50). In 2018 this figure grew to 64.7% of South African households (Stats SA, 2020:57). Although, the number of households who had access to the internet at home remained similarly around 10% in 2015 and 2018 (Stats SA, 2017:50; 2020:57). Therefore, this platform is used by a smaller group but growing number of people.

Moreover, gathering political news on an online platform was also found to be strongly associated with the demographics of the South African citizenry (Trossbach, 2019:111-113).

The younger and more educated a citizen is, the more likely they will use the internet to gather political news. This is similarly true for the race of the respondent, with white people being the most likely and black people the least likely to access online sources for political news. Consequently, the huge amount of inequality in South Africa that exists largely along racial lines is also visible amongst the internet access to gather political news (Trossbach, 2019:111-113).

Research on the effects of internet news on political trust is still limited. However, the findings of this study between internet usage and trust supports a growing literature on the same (e.g. Im *et al*., 2014; Ceron, 2015; Zhou *et al.,* 2019; Lu *et al*., 2019; You and Wang, 2020). These scholars argue that the way the internet is set up has unique effects on trust, as compared to traditional media platforms. Although the online news media platforms can follow the traditional 'top-down' approach, not all the information that the citizens access on the internet follows this format. The role that citizens play on the internet is a two-way street, citizens are both receivers and disseminators of information. On the internet users can upload content and participate in online discussion forums (Im *et al.,* 2014:743-744; Ceron, 2015:495; Zhou *et al.*, 2019:2-3; Lu *et al*., 2019:2; You and Wang, 2020:69). The internet makes it easier for the 'wrong' information to be made public as the lack of a filter can be present causing the citizens to be exposed to a larger amount of information (Im *et al.,* 2014:745; Ceron, 2015:494). The traditional media platforms can be influenced by the political and economic elites in a state (You and Wang, 2020:69-70). The content of the information and the 'set up' of platform accessed by the citizens on the internet are emphasised factors in determining how this media platform influences trust (Ceron, 2015:495).

The control and the perceived control of the state are also argued to play a role in determining how internet usage shapes political trust (Zhou *et al*., 2019; You and Wang, 2020). The less space within a state for various avenues for freedom of expression to take place, the more likely political trust would be eroded by the internet (You and Wang, 2020:69). Furthermore, the more strictly controlled the traditional media platforms are by the government, the more likely the internet will deliver negative information to the citizens that were not covered or covered inconsistently by the traditional media platforms, such as corruption scandals for example (Zhou *et al.,* 2019:12).

The South African media environment is not immune to scandals, as previously discussed in Chapter 2, with allegations of corruption of some media platforms (Wasserman, 2010:573).

Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter 1, various political scandals have arisen in the South African political landscape. Some citizens may have had access to information on the internet that was not reported on by some traditional media platforms which could potentially play a role in swaying political trust negatively.

Furthermore, it is proposed by Zhou *et al.* (2019:12) that Chinese citizens engaging with the internet to gather news are more politically and socially engaged due to the interactive forums on the internet. The author also found that the citizens using the internet demonstrated a higher demand for political participation and political supervision over various political aspects, such as how taxes were spent for example (Zhou *et al*., 2019:12). Furthermore, citizens who gather their news through internet usage were more likely to have higher expectations of their government, which, if left unmet, could negatively shape trust (Zhou *et al*., 2019:12-14).

Lastly, it was argued by You and Wang (2020:80) that using the internet to gather political news caused a rise of critical citizens in democratic states. Critical citizens are citizens that are cynical and untrusting towards the political institutions and actors but are overall supportive of the democratic state (Norris, 1999:10-12). Critical citizens are emphasised to be formed through mass education and tertiary education especially, and from improving the living standard of people (You and Wang, 2020:69). It could be suggested that the finding by You and Wang (2020), is in existence in the South African context, where citizens who gather political news from the internet are more likely to be critical citizens. South African citizens who use the internet for political news purposes appear to be more educated and have a higher standard of living (Trossbach, 2019:111-113). Furthermore, Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg (2016:19-20) found that a large number of critical citizens are in existence in South Africa. Although further research of this in in the South African context is required.

If utilising the internet to gather political news is linked to critical citizens in South Africa, such as in the study by You and Wang (2020), this could reveal an important aspect of the South African democracy which could potentially grow as internet usage to gather political news increases over time. Critical citizens aid in keeping the government accountable and more reactive to the demands of the public (Norris, 1999:10-12).

7.4 SHORTCOMINGS OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Various shortcomings in this study can be identified. The first relates to the lack of a content analysis of the political news that was covered by the South African media institutions. A content analysis would provide an overview of more of the topics that were published and

broadcasted by the various media platforms in greater detail. A content analysis of the media would have been beneficial to aid in potentially explaining the effect of political news on political trust. A recommendation of future research would be to conduct an in-depth concept analysis of the political news that is covered by the South African media institutions.

As humans are complex beings, and attitudes and behaviours are not shaped by one factor but rather a multitude of factors, another identified shortcoming is that the summary statistics in this study are simple bivariate correlations. The bivariate correlations only show the measure of association between two variables and not between how a variable is affected by a multitude of variables. The inclusion of a multiple regression model would have aided in a better understanding how political trust is swayed by the different media platforms utilised to gather political news.

Furthermore, this study only examined the correlations between gathering political news and trust in political institutions, not regime institutions as Norris (1999) conceptual framework identifies. A recommendation for future research would be to expand the conceptualisation to trust in regime institutions as well as of political institutions as the political actors and institutions were the targets of trust that were influenced by political news gathering habits the most.

As this study was a purely quantitative study, it cannot offer a deeper analysis for the reasons why gathering political news shapes political trust in manner found in this study. This study can only provide the generalised information how political news affects political trust in the years 2015 and 2018. This is especially pertinent with how gathering political news from the internet and from the traditional media platforms have such divergent implications on political trust of political actors and institutions. A key recommendation for further research would be to explore the effect of gathering political news on political trust in a qualitative manner. Moreover, the internet is the least used source of political news in South Africa, it would be interesting to conduct further research overtime as the internet grows as a more frequently accessed news source potentially. It is possible that the malaise associated with internet usage to gather political news specifically could enlarge hypothetically.

REFERENCE LIST

Aarts, K., Fladmoe, A. and Strömbäck, J. 2011. Media and political trust across countries, in T. Aalberg and J. Curran (eds.). *How Media Inform Democracy: A Comparative Approach*. Philadelphia, PA: Routledge. 98–118.

Afrobarometer. 2015. *Afrobarometer Round 6* [Online]. Available: http://afrobarometer.org/ [2019, July 16].

Afrobarometer. 2018. *Afrobarometer Round 7* [Online]. Available: http://afrobarometer.org/ [2019, July 16].

Afrobarometer. 2020. About Afrobarometer. [Online], Available: http://www.afrobarometer.org/about/ [2020, April 10].

Al Jareeza. 2018. Six political scandals President Zuma has survived. [Online] 8 August. Available: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/08/political-scandals-president-zuma-survived-170808082727236.html [2020, April 5].

Almond, G.A. and Verba, S. 1963. *The Civic Culture.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Anderson, C. and Tverdova, Y. 2003. Corruption, political allegiances, and attitudes toward government in contemporary democracies. *American Journal of Political Science*, 47(1): 91–109.

Ansah, P.A.V. 1994. Communication research and development in Africa: An overview, in C.J. Hamelink and O. Linne (eds.). *Mass Communication Research on Problems and Policies: The Art of Asking the Right Questions.* Norwood: Ablex. 229-248.

Arun, N. 2019. State capture: Zuma, the Guptas, and the sale of South Africa. *BBC News* [Online] 15 July. Available: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-48980964 [2020, April 5].

Askvik, S. 2008. Trust in the post-apartheid government of South Africa: The roles of identity and policy performance. *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 46(4):516–539.

Askvik, S. 2010. The dynamics of political trust in South Africa, 1995–2006. *Politikon*, 37(1):25–44.

Avery, J.M. 2009. Video malaise or virtuous circle? The influence of the news media on political trust. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 14:410–432.

Bailard, C.S. 2012. Testing the internet's on democratic satisfaction: A multi-methodological, cross-national approach. *Journal of Information Technology and Politics*, 9(2):185–204.

Barakso, M., Sabet, D.M. and Schaffner, B. 2014. *Understanding Political Science Research Methods: The Challenge of Inference*. New York, NY: Routledge.

BBC News. 2016. South Africa's Jacob Zuma 'sorry' over Nkandla scandal. [Online] 1 April. Available: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35943941 [2020, April 5].

BBC News. 2017. Anti-Zuma protests take place across South Africa. [Online] 7 April. Available: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-39526313 [2020, April 5].

Berger, G. 1998. Media and democracy in southern Africa. *Review of African Political Economy*, 25(78):599–610.

Berman, J. and Witzner, D.J. 1997. Technology and democracy. *Social Research*, 64(3):1313–1319.

Berzina, I. 2018. Political trust and Russian media in Latvia Open. *Journal on Baltic Security*, 4(2):2–9.

Booysen, S. 1991. Mass media, social networks and the political socialization of South Africa's white students. *Communicare*, 10(1):58–83.

Brady, H.E. 2000. Contributions of survey research to political science. *Political Science and Politics*, 33(1):47–57.

Bratton, M. and Mattes, R. 2001. Support for democracy in Africa: Intrinsic or instrumental. *British Journal of Political Science*, 31(3):447–474.

Brosius, A., Van Elsas, E.J. and De Vreese, C.H. 2019. How media shape political trust: News coverage of immigration and its effects on trust in the European Union. *European Union Politics*, 20(3):447–467.

Burnham, P., Gilland Lutz, K., Grant, W. and Layton-Henry, Z. 2008. *Research Methods in Politics.* 2nd edition. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Business Tech. 2016. Inside Jacob Zuma's year from hell. [Online] 7 December. Available: https://businesstech.co.za/news/business-opinion/146229/inside-jacob-zumas-year-from-hell/ [2020, April 5].

Butler, A. 2005. How democratic is the African National Congress?. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 31(4): 719-736.

Camaj, L. 2014. Media use and political trust in an emerging democracy: Setting the institutional trust agenda in Kosovo International. *Journal of Communication*, 8:187–209.

Campbell, A., Converse, P.E., Miller, W.E. and Stokes, D.E. 1960. *The American Voter*. New York, NY: Wiley.

Cappella, J.N. and Jamieson, K.H. 1997. *Spiral of Cynicism: The Press and the Public Good*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Catterberg, G. and Moreno, A. 2005. The Individual Bases of Political Trust: Trends in New and Established Democracies. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 18(1): 31–48.

Ceron, A. 2015. Internet, news, and political trust: The difference between social media and online media outlets. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 20:487–507.

Ceron, A. and Memoli, V. 2015. Trust in government and media slant: A cross-sectional analysis of media effects in twenty-seven European countries. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 20(3):339 –359.

Chaffee, S.H. and Kanihan, S,F. 1997. Learning about politics from the mass media. *Political Communication*, 14(4):421–430.

Chaffee, S.H. and Schleuder, J. 1986. Measurement and effects of attention to media news. *Human Communication Research*, 13: 76-107.

Chan, S. 1997. Effects of attention to campaign coverage on political trust. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 9(3): 286-296.

Chanley, V.A., Rudolph, T.J. and Rahn, M.W. 2000. The origins and consequences of public trust in government: A time series analysis. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 64(3):239–256.

Chen, X. and Shi, T. 2001. Media effects on political confidence and trust in the People's Republic of China in the post-Tiananmen period. *East Asia*, 19(3):84–118.

Cheng, X. 2020. Malaise Effect or Virtuous Effect? The Dynamics of Internet Use and Political Trust in China. *International Journal of Communication*, 14: 1995–2016.

Chingwete, A. 2016. In South Africa, citizens' trust in president, political institutions drops sharply. *Afrobarometer Dispatch*, (90):1–16.

Citrin, J. 1974. Comment: The political relevance of trust in government. *The American Political Science Review*, 68(3):973–988.

Citrin, J., McClosky, H., Shanks, J.M. and Sniderman, P.M. 1975. Personal and Political Sources of Political Alienation. *British Journal of Political Science*, 5(1): 1-31.

Claassen, G. 2001. Exploring a model for training journalism students. *Ecquid Novi*, 22(1):3–24.

Clawson, R.A., and Oxley, Z.M. 2012. *Public Opinion: Democratic Ideals, Democratic Practice*. Washington: CQ Press.

Cohen, M. and Vollgraaff, R. 2019. Desperate need for bailouts as SA's SOEs disintegrate. *Business Day Live* [Online] 25 June. Available: https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/economy/2019-06-25-desperate-need-for-bailouts-as-sas-soes-disintegrate/ [2020, April 5].

Cook, T. and Gronke, P. 2005. The sceptical American: Revisiting the meanings of trust in government and confidence in institutions. *Journal of Politics*, 67(3):784–803.

Crête, J., Pelletier, R., and Couture, J. 2006. Political trust in Canada: what matters: politics or economics?, in *Canadian Political Science Association. Toronto*: York University: 1-30.

Criado, H. and Herreros, F. 2007. Political support: Taking into account the institutional context. *Comparative Political Studies*, 40(12):1511–1532.

Curran, J. 2002. *Media and Power*. London: Routledge.

Curran, J., Coen, S., Aalberg, T., Hayashi, K., Jones, P.K., Splendore, S., Papathanassopoulos, S., Rowe, D. and Tiffen, R. 2013. Internet revolution revisited: A comparative study of online news. *Media, Culture and Society*, 35(7):880–897.

Dalton, R. 1998. *Political support in advanced industrial democracies*. Working paper. Irvine, CA: Center for the Study of Democracy, University of California.

Dalton, R. 2004. *Democratic Challenges, Democratic Choices: The Erosion of Political Support in Established Democracies*. London: Oxford University Press.

Dalton, R. 2006. *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies.* 4th edition. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Dalton, R. 2014. *Citizen Politics*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

De Vaus, D.A. 2001. *Research Design In Social Research.* London: Sage.

De Vreese, C.H. 2005. The spiral of cynicism reconsidered. *European Journal of Communication*, 20(3):283–301.

Dludla, N. 2016. South Africa court: President Jacob Zuma failed to 'uphold, defend and respect' constitution. *Reuters* [Online], 31 March. Available: https://www.businessinsider.com/south-africa-court-president-zuma-failed-to-uphold-constitution-2016-3?IR=T [2020, April 5].

Donsbach, W. and Traugott, M.W. (eds.). 2008. *The Sage Handbook Of Public Opinion Research.* London: Sage.

Druckman, J. 2003. The power of television images: The first Kennedy-Nixon debate revisited. *Journal of Politics*, 65:559–571.

Du Plooy-Cilliers, F. and Bezuidenhout, R. 2003. Young adults' disillusionment, apathy and cynicism in politics and television current affairs. Paper delivered at the Southern African Communication Association (Sacomm) Annual Conference, Durban Institute of Technology, Durban.

Duncan, J., Meijer, I.C, Drok, N., Garman, A., Strelitz, L., Steenveld, L., Bosch, T,. Ndlovu, M. and Media Tenor. 2013. *A baseline study of youth identity, the media and the public sphere in South Africa*. Grahamstown: School of Journalism and Media Studies, Rhodes University.

Easton, D. 1965. *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*. New York: Wiley.

Easton, D. 1975. A reassessment of the concept of political support. *British Journal of Political Science*, 5(4):435–457.

Easton, D. 1976. Theoretical approaches to political support. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 9(3):431–448.

Elenbaas, M. and De Vreese, C.H. 2008. The effects of strategic news on political cynicism and vote choice among young voters. *Journal of Communication*, 58:550–567.

ENCA. 2017. Anti-Zuma protests mostly peaceful: police [Online] 8 April. Available: https://www.enca.com/south-africa/anti-zuma-protests-mostly-peaceful-police [2020, April 5].

Field, A. 2009. *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*. 3rd edition. London: Sage.

Findlay, S. and Dayile, A. 2019. *So much choice, but not enough voice: analysing South Africa's media coverage of 2019 elections.* Johannesburg: Media Monitoring Africa.

Friedman, S. 1999. Agreeing to differ: African democracy, its obstacles and prospects. *Social Research*, 66(3):825–858.

Friedman, S. 2005. Getting better than "world class": The challenge of governing postapartheid South Africa. *Social Research*, 72(3):757–784.

Friedman, S. 2010. Beneath the Surface: Civil Society and Democracy after Polokwane, in N. Misra Dexter and J. February (eds.). *Testing Democracy: Which Way is South Africa Going?*. Cape Town: Idasa: 117–139.

Fukuyama, F. 2015. Why is democracy performing so poorly? *Journal of Democracy*, 26(1):11–17.

Gans, H.J. 2002. *Democracy and the News*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Gibson, J. 2003. The legacy of apartheid: Racial differences in the legitimacy of democratic institutions and processes in the new South Africa. *Comparative Political Studies*, 36(7):772–800.

Gire, J.T. 1999. A psychological analysis of corruption in Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 1(2):1–15.

Gould, Jack. 1972. *The X of the Campaign: TV Personality.* New York Times Magazine, June 22. In The Mass Media and Politics, ed. James E Fixx. New York: Arno Press.

Gouws, A. and Schulz-Herzenberg, C. 2016. What's trust got to do with it? Measuring levels of political trust in South Africa 20 years after democratic transition. *Politikon*, 43(1):7–29.

Grimes, M. 2008. Consent, political trust and compliance: Rejoinder to Kaina's remarks on 'Organizing consent'. *European Journal of Political Research*, 47(4):522–535.

Gross, K., Aday, S. and Brewer, P.R. 2005. A panel study of media effects on political and social trust after September 11, 2001. *Press/Politics*, 9(4):49–73.

Hallin, D.C. 1992. Sound bite news: Television coverage of elections, 1968–1988. *Journal of Communication*, 42:5–24.

Hanitzsch, T. and Berganza, R. 2012. Explaining journalists' trust in public institutions across 20 countries: Media freedom, corruption, and ownership matter most. *Journal of Communication*, 62:794–814.

Hardin, R. 2006. *Trust*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hetherington, M.J. 1998. The political relevance of political trust. *The American Political Science Review*, 92(4):791–808.

Hibbing, J.R. and Theiss-Morse, E. 1995. *Congress as Public Enemy: Public Attitudes Toward American Political Institutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hooghe, M. 2011. Why there is basically only one form of political trust. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 13:269–275.

Hox, J.J. and Boeije, H.R. 2005. Data collection: Primary vs secondary, in K. Kempf-Leonard (ed.). *Enclycopedia of Social Measurement.* Volume 1. Utrecht: Utrecht University. 593–599.

Hutchison, M.L. and Johnson, K. 2011. Capacity to trust? Institutional capacity, conflict, and political trust in Africa, 2000–2005. *Journal of Peace Research*, 48(6):737–752.

Im, T., Cho, W., Porumbescu, G. and Park, J. 2014. Internet, trust in government, and citizen compliance. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory: J-PART*, 24(3): 741-763.

Inglehart, R. 1988. The renaissance of political culture. *The American Political Science Review*, 82(4):1203–1230.

Inglehart, R. 1999. Postmodernization erodes respect for authority, but increases support for democracy, in P. Norris (ed.). *Critical citizens' global support for democratic governance.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. 236–256.

IOL. 2018. #ZumaCharges: Zuma's five biggest career scandals. [Online] 16 March. Available: https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/zumacharges-zumas-five-biggest-career-scandals-13863105 [2020, April 5].

Jamieson, K.H. 1992. *Dirty Politics: Deception, Distraction, and Democracy*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Jebril, N., Loveless, M. and Stetka, V. 2013. *Media and democratisation: What is known about the role of mass media in transitions to democracy. Final report*. Oxford: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford.

Johnston, R., Hagen, M.G. and Jamieson, K.H. 2004. *The 2000 Presidential Election And The Foundations Of Party Politics*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Keeter, S. 1987. The illusion of intimacy: Television and the role of candidate personal qualities in voter choice. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 51:344–358.

Klingemann, H.D. 1999. Mapping political support in the 1990s: A global analysis, in P. Norris (ed.). *Critical Citizens' Global Support for Democratic Governance.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. 31–56.

Klingemann, H.D. and Fuchs, D. 1995. *Citizens and the State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lane, J.R. and Ersson, S. 2007. South Africa: Explaining democratic stability. *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 45(2):219–240.

Levi, M. and Stoker, L. 2000. Political trust and trustworthiness. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 3:475–507.

Lin, Y. and Lim, S. 2002. Relationships of media use to political cynicism and efficacy: A preliminary study of young South Korean voters. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 12(1):25–39.

Loewenberg, G. 1971. The influence of Parliamentary behavior on regime stability: Some conceptual clarifications. *Comparative Politics*, 3:177–200.

Lu, J., Qi, L. and Yu, X. 2019. Political trust in the internet context: a comparative study in 36 countries. *Government Information Quarterly*, 36:1-10.

Makatile, D. 2016. High cost of Nkandla exceeds R246m. *IOL* [Online], 7 February. Available: https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/high-cost-of-nkandla-exceeds-r246m-1981002 [2020, April 5].

Malila, V. 2013. *A baseline study of youth identity, the media and the public sphere in South Africa*: *Final report*. Grahamstown: School of Journalism and Media Studies, Rhodes University.

Malila, V. 2016. Voting void? Young South Africans, elections and the media. *Communicatio*, 42(2):170–190.

Malila, V. and Oelofsen, M. 2016. Young citizens in South Africa: A paradox of engagement with politics and the media. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 8(2):187–203.

Mantzaris, E., Tsekeris, T. and Tsekeris, C. 2017. Multiple-class existence, corruption and trust in South Africa. *Innovative Issues and Approaches in Social Sciences*, 10(2):80–97.

Marien, S. 2011. Measuring political trust across time and space, in M. Hooghe and S. Zmerli (eds.). *Political trust: Why context matters*. Colchester: ECPR Press. 13–46.

Marien, S. and Hooghe, M. 2011. Does political trust matter? An empirical investigation into the relation between political trust and support for law compliance. *European Journal of Political Research*, 50:267–291.

Mattes, R. 2002. South Africa: Democracy without the people? *Journal of Democracy*, 13(1):22–36.

Mattes, R. 2012. The 'Born Frees': The prospects for generational change in post-apartheid South Africa. *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 47(1):133–153.

Mattes, R. 2013. Systematic, quantitative political science in South Africa: The road less travelled. *Politikon*, 40(3):479–499.

McAllister, I. 1999. The economic performance of governments, in P. Norris (ed.). *Critical Citizens' Global Support for Democratic Governance.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. 188–203.

McCombs, M.E. and Shaw, D.L. 1972. The agenda-setting function of mass media. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36(2):176–187.

McNair, B. 2009. Journalism and democracy, in K. Wahl-Jorgensen and T. Hanitzsch (eds.). *The handbook of journalism studies.* New York, NY: Routledge. 237–249.

McQuail, D. 2005. *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory.* London: Sage.

Media Monitoring Africa. 2014. *Reporting elections: a good story to tell?*. Johannesburg: Media Monitoring Africa.

Miller, A.H. and Listhaug, O. 1999. Political performance and institutional trust, in P. Norris (ed.). *Critical citizens' global support for democratic governance.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. 204–216.

Miller, H. 1974. Political issues and trust in government: 1964–1970. *The American Political Science Review*, 68(3):951–972.

Mishler, W. and Rose, R. 1997. Trust, distrust and scepticism: Popular evaluations of civil and political institutions in post-communist societies. *Journal of Politics*, 59(2):418–451.

Mishler, W. and Rose, R. 2001. What are the origins of political trust? Testing institutional and cultural theories in post-communist societies. *Comparative Political Studies*, 34(1):30–62.

Moy, P. and Scheufele, D.A. 2000. Media effects on political and social trust. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 77(4):744–759.

Moy, P., Pfau, M. and Kahlor, L.A. 1999. Media use and public confidence in democratic institutions. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 43(2):137–158.

Muller, E.N. and Jukam, T.O. 1977. On the meaning of political support. *The American Political Science Review*, 71(4):1561–1595.

Mutize, M. and Gossel, S. 2017. Corrupt SOEs lie at the heart of SA's economic woes. *Business Day Live* [Online] 20 June. Available: https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/2017-06-20-corrupt-soes-lie-at-the-heart-of-sas-economic-woes/

Mutz, D.C. and Reeves, B. 2005. The new video-malaise: Effects of televised incivility on political trust. *American Political Science Review*, 99(1):1–15.

Ndlovu, M. 2008. South African journalism and mass communication research on youth and news media: A reflection. *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, 29(1):64–78.

Ndlovu, M. 2010. Reading young adult South Africans' reading of national television news. *Communicare*, 29(2): 26–47.

Ndlovu, M. 2014. South African young adults' viewership of television news and implications for democracy. *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, 35(2): 92-108.

Ndlovu, M. 2014. South African young adults' viewership of television news and implications for democracy. *African Journalism Studies*, 35(2):92–108.

News 24. 2014. The A – Z of SA's Fraud and Corruption Scandals. [Online] 3 April. Available: https://www.news24.com/news24/mynews24/The-A-Z-of-SAs-Fraud-Corruption-Scandals-20140403 [2020, April 5].

News 24. 2018. Flashback: 5 of Zuma's biggest scandals. [Online] 13 February. Available: https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/flashback-5-of-zumas-biggest-scandals-20180213 [2020, April 5].

Newton, K. 1999. Mass media effects: Mobilization or media malaise? *British Journal of Political Science*, 29(4):577–599.

Newton, K. and Norris, P. 2000. Confidence in public institutions: Faith, culture or performance?, in R. Putnam and S. Pharr (eds.). *Disaffected democracies: What's troubling the trilateral countries?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 52–73.

Norris, P. (ed.). 1999. *Critical Citizens*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Norris, P. 2000. *A Virtuous Circle: Political Communications in Post-Industrial Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Norris, P. 2011. *Democratic Deficit: Critical Citizens Revisited*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Paterson, C. and Malila, V. 2013. Beyond the information scandal: When South Africa bought into global news. *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, 34(2):1–14.

Patterson, T.E. 1993. *Out of order*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

Pennings, P., Kemen, H. and Kleinnijenhuis, J. 2006. *Doing Research in Political Science.* London: Sage.

Pepler, E. 2003. Traditional news values vs. popular culture: Media preferences of the younger generations. Paper delivered at the conference Media in Africa: Current Issues and Future Challenges, Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch.

Phakathi, B. 2019. 'Fall guy' in Gupta Waterkloof landing resigns. *Business Day Live* [Online] 4 September. Available: https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/2019-09-04-fall-guy-in-gupta-waterkloof-landing-resigns/ [2020, April 5].

Pharr, S.J., Putnam, R.D. and Dalton, R. 2000. A quarter-century of declining confidence. *Journal of Democracy*, 11(2):5–25.

Pierce, R. 2011. *Research Methods in Politics*. London: Sage.

Pinkleton, B.E. and Austin, E.W. 2001. Individual motivations, perceived media importance, and political disaffection. *Political Communication*, 18(3):321–334.

Putnam, R. (ed.). 2002. *Democracies in Flux: The Evolution Of Social Capital in Contemporary Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Putnam, R.D. and Pharr, S.J. (eds.). 2000. *Disaffected Democrats: What's Troubling the Trilateral Democracies?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Rabianski, J.S. 2003. Primary and secondary data: Concepts, concerns, errors, and issues. *The Appraisal Journal*, 71(1):43–55.

Randall, D. (2000). *The Universal Journalist*. London: Pluto Press.

Ranney, A. 1983. *Channels of Power: The Impact of Television on American Politics.* New York, NY: Basic Books.

Robinson, J.M. and Appel, K.R. 1979. Network news coverage of congress. *Political Science Quarterly*, 94(3):407–18.

Robinson, M.J. 1975. American political legitimacy in an era of electronic journalism: Reflections on the evening news, in D. Cater and R. Adler (eds.). *Television as a Social Force.* New York, NY: Praeger. 97–139.

Robinson, M.J. 1976. Public affairs television and the growth of political malaise. *American Political Science Review*, 70:409–432.

Rohrschneider, R. 2002. The democracy deficit and mass support for an EU-wide government. *American Journal of Political Science*, 46(2):463–475.

Rose, R. 2007. Learning to support new regimes in Europe. *Journal of Democracy*, 18(3):111–125.

Schneider, I. 2017. Can we trust measures of political trust? Assessing measurement equivalence in diverse regime types. *Social Indicators Research*, 133(3):963–984.

Scholz, J.T. and Lubell, M. 1998. Trust and taxpaying: Testing the heuristic approach to collective action. *American Journal of Political Science*, 42(2):398–417.

Schulz-Herzenberg, C and Gouws, A. 2017. Does political trust lead to reconciliation?, in K. Lefko-Everett, R. Govender and D. Foster (eds.). *Rethinking reconciliation: Evidence from South Africa*. Cape Town: HRSC Press. 201–227.

Seyd, B. 2015. How do citizens evaluate public officials? The role of performance and expectations on political trust. *Political Studies*, 63(1):73–90.

Shehata, A. 2014. Game Frames, Issue Frames, and Mobilization: Disentangling the Effects of Frame Exposure and Motivated News Attention on Political Cynicism and Engagement. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 26 (2): 157–177.

Shen, F. and Guo, Z.S. 2013. The last refuge of media persuasion: News use, national pride and political trust in China. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 23(2):135–151.

Shi, T. 2001. Cultural values and political trust: A comparison of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan. *Comparative Politics*, 33(4):401–419.

Sidimba, L. 2019. #StateCaptureInquiry: Why the Gupta plane was allowed at Waterkloof. *IOL* [Online] 4 July. Available: https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/statecaptureinquiry-why-the-gupta-plane-was-allowed-at-waterkloof-28647874 [2020, April 5].

Sigelman, L. and Bullock, D. 1991. Candidates, issues, horse races and hoopla: Presidential campaign coverage, 1888–1988. *American Politics Quarterly*, 19:5–32.

Smith, T. 2018. From Firepools to ramaphoria: Key media moments over the last 10 years and why they matter for our democracy. [Online]. Available: https://mediamonitoringafrica.org/ [2020, April 1].

Southall, R. 2014. The context of the South African election of 2014: Prologue to change?, in C. Schulz-Herzenberg and R. Southall (eds.). *Election 2014: The Campaigns, Results and Future Prospects*. Pretoria: Jacana Media.

Southall, R. 2019. South African democracy at risk? The troubled context of the 2019 general election, in C. Schulz-Herzenberg and R. Southall (eds.). *Election 2019: Change and Stability in South Africa's Democracy*. Pretoria: Jacana Media.

Sparks, C. 2009. South African media in transition. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 1(2):195–220.

Sparks, C. 2011. South African media in comparative perspective. *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, 32(2):5–19.

Spector, P.E. 2019. Do not cross me: optimizing the use of cross-sectional designs. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 34:125–137.

Stats SA (Statistics South Africa). 2017. Statistical release P0318: General Household Survey 2015. Pretoria: ISIbalo House.

Stats SA (Statistics South Africa). 2019. Sustainable Development Goals: Country report 2019. Pretoria: ISIbalo House.

Stats SA (Statistics South Africa). 2020. Statistical release P0318: General Household Survey 2018. Pretoria: ISIbalo House.

Stellenbosch University. 2019. Human Research (Humanities) Ethics [Online]. Available: https://www.sun.ac.za/english/research-innovation/Research-Development/integrity-ethics/human-research-(humanities)-ethics [2019, June 13].

Stoycheff, E. and Nisbet, E.C. 2014. What's the bandwidth for democracy? Deconstructing internet penetration and citizen attitudes about governance. *Political Communication*, 31(4):628–646.

Strelitz, L.N. 2002. *Where the global meets the local: South African youth and their experience of global media*. Doctoral dissertation, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.

Strömbäck, J. and Shehata, A. 2010. Media malaise or a virtuous circle? Exploring the causal relationships between news media exposure, political news attention and political interest. *European Journal of Political Research*, 49:575–597.

Strömbäck, J., Djerf-Pierre, M. and Shehata, A. 2016. A question of time? A longitudinal analysis of the relationship between news media consumption and political trust. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 21(1):88–110.

Suárez, L. 1996. Mass communication and the major challenges, in *Media and democracy in Latin America and Caribbean,* Paris: UNESCO. 48-53.

Tettey, W.J. 2001. The media and democratisation in Africa: Contributions, constraints, and concerns. *Media, Culture and Society*, 23:5–31.

Tourangeau, R., Rips, L.J. and Rasinski, K. 2000. *The Psychology of Survey Response.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Toyana, M. and Macharia, J. 2016. South Africa's Zuma repays some state money in home improvement scandal. *Reuters* [Online], 12 September. Available: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-safrica-zuma/south-africas-zuma-repays-some-state-money-in-home-improvement-scandal-idUSKCN11I16V [2020, April 5].

Trossbach, A.R. 2019. "Politics as usual?"-The Influence of the Internet on Political Attitudes, and Behaviour in South Africa: A Mixed-Methods Approach. Unpublished master's dissertation. Stellenbosch: Stellenbosch University.

Tworzecki, H. and Semetko, H.A. 2012. Media use and political engagement in three new democracies: Malaise versus mobilization in the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 17(4):407–432.

Vogt, P. 2007. *Quantitative Research Methods for Professionals.* Boston, MA: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.

Voltmer, K. (ed.). 2006. *Mass Media and Political Communication in New Democracies*. London: Routledge.

Wang, Z. 2005. Before the emergence of critical citizens: Economic development and political trust in China. *International Review of Sociology*, 15(1):155–171.

Wasserman, H. 2010. Freedom's just another word? Perspectives on media freedom and responsibility in South Africa and Namibia. *The International Communication Gazette*, 72(7):567–588.

Wasserman, H. and Garman, A. 2014. The meanings of citizenship: Media use and democracy in South Africa. *Social Dynamics*, 40(2):392–407.

Weisberg, H.F., Krosnick, J.A. and Bowen, B.D. 1996. *An Introduction to Survey Research, Polling and Data Analysis.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

White, R.A. 1994. The public sphere as an integrating concept for development communication, in C.J. Hamelink and O. Linne (eds.). *Mass Communication Research on Problems and Policies: The Art of Asking the Right Questions.* Norwood: Ablex.

Wu, Y. 2014. The impact of media on public trust in legal authorities in China and Taiwan. *Asian Criminology*, 9(2):85–101.

Yang, Q. and Tang, W. 2010. Exploring the sources of institutional trust in China: Culture, mobilization, or performance? *Asian Politics and Policy*, 2(3):415–436.

You, Y. and Wang, Z. 2020. The Internet, political trust, and regime types: a cross-national and multilevel analysis. *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, 21: 68–89.

Zhou, D., Deng, W. and Wu, X. 2019. Impacts of internet use on political trust: new evidence from china. *Emerging Markets Finance and Trade*, 1-13.

Zmerli, S. and Castillo, J.C. 2015. Income inequality, distributive fairness and political trust in Latin America. *Social Science Research*, 52: 179-192.

Zmerli, S. and Hooghe, M. 2011. *Political Trust: Why Context Matters*. Colchester: ECPR Press.

THE APPENDIX: AFROBAROMETER SURVEY QUESTION ITEMS

THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

The media platforms within the independent variable (Q12 and Q12)

Media platform	Round 6: 2015	Round 7: 2018
Radio	Q12 A	Q12 A
Television	Q12 B	Q12 B
Newspapers	Q12 C	Q12 C
Internet	Q12 D	Q12 D

Afrobarometer survey question item: Round 6 and 7

12. How often do you get news from the following sources? *[Read out options]*						
	Every day	A few times a week	A few times a month	Less than once a month	Never	Don't know *[DNR]*
A. Radio	4	3	2	1	0	9
B. Television	4	3	2	1	0	9
C. Newspapers	4	3	2	1	0	9
D. Internet	4	3	2	1	0	9
E. Social media such as Facebook or Twitter	4	3	2	1	0	9

THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Political actors and political institutions

Political Actors Corruption Index question items (Q53 and Q44)

Political actor	Round 6: 2015	Round 7: 2018
The President and Officials in his Office	Q53 A	Q44 A
Members of Parliament	Q53 B	Q44 B
Government officials	Q53 C	Q44 C
Local Government Councillors	Q53 D	Q44 D

Political Actors Trust Index question items (Q53 and Q44)

Political actor	Round 6: 2015	Round 7: 2018
The President	Q52 A	Q43 A
Members of Parliament	Q52 C1-SAF	Q43 C1-SAF

Political Institutions question items (Q52 and Q43)

Political institutions	Round 6: 2015	Round 7: 2018
Parliament	Q52 B	Q43 B
Your Local Government Council	Q52 E	Q43 D
The ruling ANC party	Q52 F	Q43 E
Opposition Political Parties	Q52 G	Q43 F

Afrobarometer survey question item: Round 6

52. How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? *[Read out options]*						
		Not at all	Just a little	Somewhat	A lot	Don't know/ Haven't heard *[DNR]*
A.	The President	0	1	2	3	9
B.	Parliament	0	1	2	3	9
C.	The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)	0	1	2	3	9
C1-SAF.	The Premier of this province	0	1	2	3	9
D	The South African Revenue Service or SARS					
E.	Your Local Government Council	0	1	2	3	9
F.	The ruling African National Congress (ANC) party	0	1	2	3	9
G.	Opposition Political Parties	0	1	2	3	9
H.	The Police	0	1	2	3	9
H1-SAF.	The Office of the Public Protector	0	1	2	3	9
H2-SAF.	The National Prosecuting Authority, the NPA	0	1	2	3	9
H3-SAF.	The Directorate of Priority Crime Investigations, the Hawks	0	1	2	3	9
I.	The Army	0	1	2	3	9
J.	Courts of law	0	1	2	3	9
K.	Traditional leaders	0	1	2	3	9
L.	Religious leaders	0	1	2	3	9
M-SAF.	Government broadcasting services like, SABC TV and radio	0	1	2	3	9
N- SAF.	Independent broadcasting services like E TV, Radio 702 and community radio stations	0	1	2	3	9

Afrobarometer survey question item: Round 7

43. How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? *[Read out options]*						
		Not at all	Just a little	Somewhat	A lot	Don't know/ Haven't heard *[DNR]*
A.	The President	0	1	2	3	9
B.	Parliament	0	1	2	3	9

C.	The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)	0	1	2	3	9
C1-SAF.	The Premier of this province	0	1	2	3	9
D.	Your Local Government Council	0	1	2	3	9
E.	The ruling African National Congress (ANC) party	0	1	2	3	9
F.	Opposition political parties	0	1	2	3	9
G.	The police	0	1	2	3	9
H.	The army	0	1	2	3	9
I.	Courts of law	0	1	2	3	9
I1-SAF.	Judges	0	1	2	3	9
I2-SAF.	Magistrates	0	1	2	3	9
J.	Traditional leaders	0	1	2	3	9
K.	Religious leaders	0	1	2	3	9
L-SAF.	The South African Revenue Service (SARS)	0	1	2	3	9
M-SAF.	The Public Protector	0	1	2	3	9
N-SAF.	Government broadcasting services like, SABC TV and radio	0	1	2	3	9
O-SAF.	Independent broadcasting services like E TV, Radio 702 and community radio stations	0	1	2	3	9

Afrobarometer survey question item: Round 6

53. How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? *[Read out options]*

		None	Some of them	Most of them	All of them	Don't know/ Haven't heard *[DNR]*
A.	The President and Officials in his Office	0	1	2	3	9
B.	Members of Parliament	0	1	2	3	9
C.	Government officials	0	1	2	3	9
D.	Local Government Councillors	0	1	2	3	9
E.	Police	0	1	2	3	9
F.	Tax Officials, like South African Revenue Service officials or Local Government tax collectors	0	1	2	3	9
G.	Judges and Magistrates	0	1	2	3	9
H.	Traditional leaders	0	1	2	3	9
I.	Religious leaders	0	1	2	3	9
J.	Business executives	0	1	2	3	9

Afrobarometer survey question item: Round 7

44. How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? *[Read out options]*						
		None	Some of them	Most of them	All of them	Don't know/ Haven't heard *[DNR]*
A.	The president and officials in his office	0	1	2	3	9
B.	Members of Parliament	0	1	2	3	9
C.	Government officials	0	1	2	3	9
D.	Local Government Councilors	0	1	2	3	9
E.	Police	0	1	2	3	9
F.	Judges and magistrates	0	1	2	3	9
G.	Traditional leaders	0	1	2	3	9
H.	Religious leaders	0	1	2	3	9
I.	Business executives	0	1	2	3	9
J.	Non-governmental organisations	0	1	2	3	9
K-SAF.	Tax Officials, like South African Revenue Service officials or Local Government rates collectors	0	1	2	3	9
L-SAF	Judges	0	1	2	3	9
M-SAF	Magistrates	0	1	2	3	9

Regime performance

Afrobarometer survey question item: Round 6

41. Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in South Africa? Are you: [Read out options. Only one option to be chosen. Read the question in the language of the interview, but always read "democracy" in English. Translate "democracy" into local language only if respondent does not understand the term in the official language.]	
Very satisfied?	4
Fairly satisfied?	3
Not very satisfied?	2
Not at all satisfied?	1
South Africa is not a democracy *[Do not read]*	0
Don't know [Do not read]	9

Afrobarometer survey question item: Round 7

36. Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in South Africa? Are you: [Read out options. Only one option to be chosen. Read the question in the language of the interview, but always read "democracy" in English. Translate "democracy" into local language only if respondent does not understand the term in the official language.]	
Very satisfied?	4
Fairly satisfied?	3
Not very satisfied?	2
Not at all satisfied?	1
South Africa is not a democracy *[Do not read]*	0
Don't know [Do not read]	9

Regime principles

Afrobarometer survey question item: Round 6

30. Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion? [Read out statements. Only one option to be chosen. Read the question in the language of the interview, but always read "democracy" in English. Translate "democracy" into local language only if respondent does not understand the English term.]	
STATEMENT 1: Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.	3
STATEMENT 2:In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.	2
STATEMENT 3:For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have.	1
Don't know [Do not read]	9

Afrobarometer survey question item: Round 7

28. Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion? [Read out statements. Only one option to be chosen. Read the question in the language of the interview, but always read "democracy" in English. Translate "democracy" into local language only if respondent does not understand the English term.]	
STATEMENT 1: Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.	3
STATEMENT 2:In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.	2
STATEMENT 3:For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have.	1
Don't know [Do not read]	9